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FOLK LIFE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE VILLAGE

It is not without significance that in ceremonies of circumcision and marriage, the boy and the man have to visit the mosque in a ceremonial way where dates and food are distributed. In praise of marriage, a villager would quote the Prophet's saying, 'He who marries has perfected half his religious requirements, and he has only to fear God in the other half'. It is also worth stating that the majority of the personal names of both sexes have some religious meaning or are the names of some religious personalities.

The importance of sacredness not only permeates those levels, justifying acts and deeds, but also reaches the substance of living, namely, foodstuffs and bread, usually referred to as the 'sustenance of Islam' and which are considered to be sacred. A good harvest is a sign of God's approval; a torrent of rain which destroys the villagers' crops is a sign of His disapproval. To impart holiness to the land before sowing, or to the harvest before threshing, a sacrifice of an animal and the partaking of a communal meal are desirable acts. According to the enlightened religious view, the villagers do not distinguish between pagan and the proper Islamic concepts. The village schoolmaster said that the belief in the power of saints, sorcery, and magic, and the appeal to divination and ritual for healing the sick as practised in the village, are complexly interwoven with Islamic beliefs, but they are not in fact a part of the pure Faith.[1] It is believed that sickness might be inflicted by a saint for not fulfilling a vow taken in his name, or for not offering him his due customary gift and sacrifice. A great deal of treatment of disease and of acquiring of good luck could be achieved by prayers, sacred charms, and propitiation of saints. The strength of the religious force could be also ascertained from the fact that the most binding guarantee for a promise is to swear by the name of Allah or to read the Fatiha. It is also customary for the villagers to take an oath sacrifice for God or a saint, which is a kind of conditional oath involving the slaying of an animal on the fulfilment of a certain task and the attendant danger that may ensue in the event of perjury.

The certainty and uniformity in religious beliefs and rituals specially noted in the observance of the fasting month, is an index of the religious group cohesiveness. All the villagers belong to the Maliki school of the Sunni tradition. Most of the adult villagers attend the Friday noon prayers, and say their regular daily prayers either at home or in the mosque. There is a well-known Islamic tradition believed by the villagers that group prayers are more efficacious and rewarding than those said alone.

It is no exaggeration to say that the folk culture of the village is permeated by religious sanctions and moral values derived from the Islamic traditions as revealed in the Koran and also infused with rituals and beliefs of an older tradition. It is not difficult to assert that there is hardly

[1] See John Walker, *Folk Medicine in Modern Egypt*, London, 1934. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions*, London, 1930.

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sickness is a pious deed. It is often told to a sick person that holy people have suffered from one ailment or another and have endured it willingly for God.

All this shows how the villagers' traditional notions about health and sickness are mixed with magical and religious beliefs; God is the afflicter as well as the healer; it is He who has fixed the life span of every person, and this cannot be lengthened or precipitated by a second, much less a minute, unless He wills it. Together with this, there is the belief that hope and propitiation cannot fail to produce some expected results in certain crises of life.

The village has experienced some measure of direct contact with modern medicine as a result of the establishment of a health unit by the Ministry of Health in 1936. This health unit is a wonderful building, situated on the southern border of the village, and is composed of a maternity section, an isolation ward, and a general section. It cost the Government about £E3,000, yet it has never functioned properly or systematically as doctors who came to it could hardly endure life in the village for more than six months, whereupon they tried every possible means to be transferred to towns. The villagers appreciated the health unit at the beginning, but their resentment to it was ironically aroused during the malaria and typhoid epidemic of 1943 on the grounds that sick people were taken away to the isolation ward, and dying away from one's relatives and home is the worst thing that can happen to any person. Their hostility towards it is expressed with reference to its unfortunate location, it being near the cemetery; thus going to the health unit has become psychologically a bad omen. However, the establishment of the health unit has given folk-medicine the greatest challenge, and at present the villagers are becoming increasingly interested in medicine as such, alongside their usual traditional cures. In serious cases the doctor's help is usually sought besides the traditional cures, and it is becoming a sign of social prestige to bring him into the home of the sick; but remaining in hospital for treatment or isolation for contagious diseases is still resisted.

Although one finds that the villagers have adopted certain items of material culture from the town, such as the use of manufactured goods, new types of vegetables, and some medicines, such adoption is a surface substitution. Their ideas about land ownership, the importance of children, family and clan solidarity, categories of respect relationships, sex dichotomy, supernatural sanctions, and the importance of ritual and ceremony in both social and religious life, remain almost unaltered.

There is, however, one feature in the village's social life that has undergone a certain amount of change as a result of changes in the economic conditions, and that is the role and function of leadership. Till very recently leadership has been mainly connected with families owning large plots of land; and such families assumed the responsibility and obligation for receiving guests from outside the village, providing hospitality for

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knife and an antimony stick. The child's eyes are treated with kohl as a protection against 'running eyes'.

The navel cord is cut to a repetitive refrain. In the case of a boy, relatives would be singing:

'Who supports his father
except him who descends from his loins,
May your legs be fit for the stirrup,
and your mouth for an answer.'

For a girl they sing only one line:

'She will make her father enter into the shade! (i.e. into the cool)
and she will visit him every day!'

The most dangerous period for the newly-born child and his mother is 'the first forty days'. This is the period of confinement for the mother as she is considered to be 'unclean' and cannot cook, wash or even say her prayers. She is called 'nafasia' (breathing woman) as if her breath were not clean, and this is the reason for her seclusion, as well as segregation from the rest of the household. She should take care of herself; she is advised not to move too much or to go out in the dark. She is usually fed on chicken, chicken broth, clarified butter, molasses and other richly prepared dishes. She again becomes the centre of attention with respect to food given to her.

On the other hand, the first forty days are regarded as 'the angelic period' for the child. He is guarded by angels against the 'evil spirits'. Yet the mother must remain in close proximity to the child, never leaving him alone, because if for any reason the angels were to neglect their guardianship, the child would be besieged by the devils. If the mother has to leave the child for a short time, someone else must attend to him.

The next event in connection with the new baby is the official declaration of his name on the seventh day from his birth or sometimes at the end of the fortnight. For this purpose, a special ceremony is held called 'sobou' (related to the week). According to the village tradition the ceremony has a religious sanction from one of the sayings of the Prophet. It is almost universal in the village with regard to the naming of the first son, but less common with the succeeding sons. The most important feature in the content of the ceremony is the killing of a yearling ram (ikh), and thus causing the blood to flow, over which the baby is passed seven times. 'Blood flowing' is supposed to ward off the effects of the 'evil eye'. It is also considered as a sacrifice for the child's life, saving the child's life by giving the life of an animal. The traditional support for this is the story of the Prophet Abraham whose son Ishmael was saved by a heaven-sent ram.[1] Such a ritual is always recommended on the occasion of

[1] Ishmael according to the Koran, Isaac according to the Old Testament.

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acquiring new things, e.g. building a new house, reaping new harvest, obtaining new land. Though there is no formal ceremony in Artas (Palestine) for the naming of the child, Hilma Granqvist refers to the notion of 'the flowing of the blood' in the same way as believed in Silwa, the purpose being that life redeems life.[1]

At other major events of an individual's life, like circumcision, marriage, pilgrimage, completion of memorizing the Koran, the blood must flow to bring about blessing (baraka).

However, at the end of the meal, the oldest member present, or a religious man, asks what the child's name is, and on being told, such a name would be praised by the meeting. The reading of the 'Fatiha' (similar to the Lord's Prayer) would end the ceremony with prayers for the child's long and happy life.

The name is usually chosen by the parents, and with the first child, the name of the grandfather for a boy, or grandmother for a girl, is frequently decided upon. Granqvist has discussed at great length the significance and implications in choice of names, and it is felt unnecessary to dwell therefore on these points here.[2] In this connection, it is reported as a prophetic tradition that 'the best names are those which are similar to the Prophet's names or indicate the subservience to God'. The whole range of names could be classified into four categories: (1) those similar to the Prophet's names, reported to be thirty-three in number, e.g. Mohammad, Mahmoud, Kamil, Mustafa, Ahmad, Taha, Yaseen; those related to his family either male or female; names of the Well-Guided Caliphs. Examples of names of females connected with the Prophet are: Amina (Prophet's mother), Halima (wet-nurse), Aisha, Khadiga (wives). (2) Names indicating 'Servant of God', and this lends itself to ninety-nine names which are the attributes of God, e.g. Abd-el Rahman (Servant of the Compassionate), Abd-el Rahim (Servant of the Merciful), Abd-el Wahhab (Servant of the Giver). (3) Names of other prophets, e.g. Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), Solaiman (Solomon). (4) Modern names, usually an imitation of the city names, which do not belong to any of the previous categories: Muhsin, Fouad, Nawal, Sabah.

On the whole, the name is usually connected with some meaning or fathering a wish. The writer was told about a certain man in the village whose children used to die during the first year because it was alleged they had attractive names; as a safeguard against this he decided to call his future children by unusual names, e.g. Malaz (pot), Shwal (sack), so that they would not be envied, and thus survive. He appears, according to my informant, to have succeeded thereby in raising children.

In contrast with those in Artas in Palestine (the Arab village studied by Granqvist), the names in Silwa are never changed after the ceremony, and it would be considered a great disgrace to do so. This difference is probably

[1] Hilma Granqvist, *Child Problems among the Arabs*, p. 131.
[2] Ibid., pp. 1–50.

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seven sons or more are always held up as a model and an enviable ideal, and one of the most favourable prayers to any man is to wish him 'seven sons and to perform seven pilgrimages'.

The greater status deriving from having boys shows itself in the difference of presents given to the midwife on the birth of a boy compared with those on the birth of a girl. The announcer of the birth of a boy to the father would ask him for a present, and would warmly congratulate him, wishing him to have a brother for example for the boy if he is the first one, or to complete the seven. In the case of a girl, the father is usually teased by telling him: 'May she never sneeze.' The saying is that 'a boy is a joy even if he is stillborn'. Another saying runs, 'A boy who dies is better than seven girls'. It is also interesting to notice that fathers and mothers swear 'by the neck' of their boys, and not girls (by their lives), as one of the most effective and binding oaths. Girls jeer at their playmates who have no brothers, and swear by the life of their own brothers.

The fear of having a daughter is mainly connected with the sense of 'shame' which a girl might bring to her family, especially before her marriage. It is the responsibility of the male line of her family to arrange her marriage, and clothe and feed her if she is not married. If any disgraceful rumour about a girl or a woman spreads in the village it is the father as well as the husband who has to discipline the girl or bear the social stigma. Girls at a very early stage, on seeing a moth hovering round the fire, are taught to repeat 'Fire is preferable to shame'. It is also said that a girl is brought up only to be taken away by a man (when she is married) and this means a loss to the family.

Yet the value of the girls is often justified and rationalized by other arguments. On being told of the birth of a girl, a father would say, 'She is God's creation; and who knows where the blessedness lies?' A girl is always referred to in this context of the evaluation of the two sexes as 'the one who will usher her parents into the shade' (i.e. coolness) when they get old, as the girl is considered more compassionate than the boy. My informant, Mahmoud, told me that 'visiting one's daughter is usually an occasion for having either a pot of tea or some food; she can never let her father leave her husband's house without "wetting his throat".' Mothers are very keen on having daughters to help them in domestic work, by sending them on errands to neighbours' homes.

One of the folk songs refers to the daughter as 'appointing her father as the sole arbiter in a gathering'—which is her engagement gathering when the father fixes the bride-price 'which is the daughter's weight of gold and silver'. The song goes on to say that through the daughter 'the father stretches his roots to feed other places' and thus the girl provides a means of extending kinship relations through her marriage. What the song does not explicitly say is that a girl is no financial strain on her parents as they do not provide any marriage payment for her, and hence her marriage is not a burden on the family as with the boy.

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872 794 more memorizing of what was written in the morning, irrespective of whether the boy has actually learnt it or not during the previous period. The latter part until the afternoon prayer ('asr) would perhaps be occupied with revising the previous assignments. This is mainly co-operative work where groups of children are formed, according to the level of their advancement in their learning. On other afternoons, instead of such revision, boys may practise penmanship by writing out the alphabet, or copying out the prophetic tradition.

Such is the procedure followed every day in all the village Kuttabs, except on Thursdays, when boys leave the school after the morning break and take Friday as a holiday. On Thursday morning the boys do not write any new assignment from the Koran, but spend the morning either listening to readings from the Prophet's life and trying to learn some of the poems in his praise, or by imbibing some religious teaching, such as lustration, prayer ritual, and Islamic obligations. This might be followed by a general sweeping of the Kuttab floor in which everybody takes part. Thursday morning always ends with a congregational prayer which is said firstly by the older boys, and then repeated by the rest. The text of the prayer is as follows:

[539] [782]

O, our Lord, O, our Lord,
Who listens to our petitions,
By the sanctity of Mohammed,
Frustrate not our hopes.
Mohammed is the son of Abdullah,
and the reader of Allah's Book.
As the Holy One in Paradise,
Calls us to enter into his company
Where he will give us the drink as we shall give unto him
From the Springs of Paradise,
O, our Sheikh (who is present), may God forgive his sins,
For us and for him, the door of Paradise,
As the door of Paradise is (prepared) for the Moslems
And the door of the Fire for the Unbelievers.

After this is finished, they all recite together:

O, our Mustapha (one of the names of the Prophet), accept our petition,
And teach us knowledge, and increase in that abundantly.

This prayer will be followed by the Sheikh's exhortation to all the boys to be obedient to their parents, revise at home those parts of the Koran which they have already learnt, not to play idly in the streets, and to the older boys to attend the Friday prayers in the mosque. Then the 'Fatiha' [576] will be read by the Sheikh; and the boys, after kissing the Sheikh's hand, go home or straight to the field.

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

This is the normal routine of the Kuttab, one which has now been challenged by the compulsory school which does not allow any boy between seven and twelve years old to attend the Kuttab for a full day, and at present only those who are less than seven or over twelve can afford to remain in the Kuttab for the full day. In spite of this some of the compulsory school boys attend the Kuttab early in the morning where they write their Koranic assignment before going to the school; some of them bring their loaves of bread at lunch-time for the Sheikh, and spend about an hour after the end of the school day in the Kuttab learning the Koran.

The Kuttab is not merely an educational institution for the boys. Adults also visit it to consult the Sheikh about certain religious matters, to have a letter written, or a charm supplied against the evil eye, or just to listen to the Koran being recited, or even for an ordinary chat. They have free access to the Kuttab, sitting outside or in the outer room, or they may enter it to ask the Sheikh's permission to take away their boy temporarily for some pressing errand or task. One occasionally sees adults bringing food or tea to Kuttab children as a 'karama', or to invoke the boys' purity in asking God to fulfil one of his wishes. The Kuttab boys are supposed to combine the innocence of children with the 'baraka' of the Koran, and hence their prayers are usually answered by God. Parents go to the Kuttab to complain to the Sheikh about the misdemeanours of their sons, whereupon the Sheikh would give the boys concerned a lesson on the importance of obedience to parents, or threaten them, or even thrash them in front of their parents. The method of discipline in the Kuttab is that of *jus flagelli*. In cases of serious offences such as offending one's father or swearing at religion, or mentioning the mother in swearing, two strong boys would hold the offender's feet in a turban (usually the offender's turban if he wears one), and lift them in front of the Sheikh, who would administer the striking as he deems fit. The corporal punishment administered to the children by the Kuttab Sheikh is almost universally accepted by the villagers without complaint. During my stay, there was only one occasion on which one of the villagers lodged a complaint against the Sheikh to the police, accusing the former of unduly thrashing his son, and this, according to the Sheikh himself, was the first event of its kind in his lifetime. Since then none of the Sheikhs has accepted that boy in his Kuttab.

The Sheikhs are indeed highly respected in the village, for they not only teach the boys the Koran, but derive their status from the fact that they are the perpetuators of the Holy Book giving enlightenment to the people on religious matters. In Silwa and its neighbouring villages, the leaders of the mosque prayers (Imams) are always Kuttab Sheikhs, and people seek their advice if they are in doubt whether a particular action or deed is in conformity with religious injunctions. Some of them also recite the Koran during the nightly celebration in Ramadan and at

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159 and asked them to go away. But when the man was out of sight, the two boys returned to resume their fight. When one of them started to cry, the other fled, for if he waited, the father of the former boy would have caught him and struck him.

5. When the older boy found the ball with his brother, he snatched it from him; the younger boy started to cry. When the mother asked the older boy to give it back to his brother, he did. But when the mother went out, the older boy took the ball again and ran outside the house with it, looking proud and happy. The other boys asked him to show it to them and play together with it. When he returned home his mother spat in his face for taking the ball from his brother. He said that he did not take it, but it was given to him by his brother, who did not want it any more. Then the mother told him that he was a liar and asked him to hand the ball back to his brother.
6. When the two boys talked secretly, one of them warned the other against their enemy. They decided not to talk or sit with him or show him anything they had.
7. He screamed, saying that he felt some people trampling over him, and on asking them who they were, they refused to answer him. Then he shouted to be rescued: 'Oh, the One (Yawahid)' (a way of imploring God when in a state of distress, or when frightened, especially used in the village to summon other people for help, who on hearing such a cry, would immediately go to see what had happened).
8. He prayed for gold, clothes, shoes and socks.
9. He wants to grow up to farm and grow corn and go to Cairo. He also wants to get married. He does not want to become an old man with a bent back who is going to die.

C. *Age fourteen:*

1. The boy is angry because the other boys do not play with him.
2. He cursed his father and mother and thus made them angry. They thrashed him, and when he cried they sent him outside the house 'for the dogs to eat him'.
3. When the boy broke the jars, he was never sent again to fetch water, and his sister had to do it instead.
4. He interfered between the two boys, gave each a slap on the face and cursed their fathers.
5. The older boy took the ball from his younger brother to play with it himself. The father came and thrashed the older boy and rebuked him for being jealous of his younger brother.
6. He showed the other boy a place where gold was hidden. After collecting the gold, they sold it and with the money bought clothes, cars and bicycles.
7. He was afraid that they might be thieves who would beat him,

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THE VILLAGES AND THEIR INHABITANTS

there are three or four such buildings. Five times a day a *mueddin* chants the call to prayer from each mosque—from the minaret if there is one—and the resonant voices of these officiants may be heard far beyond the confines of the village.

An old graveyard often stands in the middle of a village, probably indicating the older boundary, the houses built beyond it having been erected later owing to the increasing population (see below, p. 72 and Fig. 32). A whitewashed building, crowned with

FIG. 10. WARP-THREADS ATTACHED TO PALM-TREES

a dome, stands, perhaps, on the highest point of the burial-ground, indicating the last resting-place of a sheikh, or holy man, or, at any rate, erected in his honour. Candles are usually lighted in the building on " the night of Friday "—*i.e.*, the night preceding the Friday—in commemoration of the sheikh. Such lights are, in most cases, the only illumination out of doors to guide the late wayfarer. These buildings, and there are often several in or around one village, are prominent architectural features, standing up with their whitewashed walls and domes above, and in glaring contrast to, the mud houses and hovels of the peasants.

Shops of different kinds are situated in the wider streets or lanes,

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believed to be beneficial to the child. I have been present at one or two such ceremonies, and the following description is typical of all.

A ram had been purchased for sacrifice, and the services of a butcher engaged for the slaughter of the animal. When I arrived at the house I was conducted on to the roof, where various members of the family were awaiting me. The ram was also there, in happy ignorance of its fate. Presently the butcher arrived, and when he had ascertained that his knife was sufficiently sharp the poor animal was made to lie on the ground on its back. Then with a "*Bismillāh er-Raḥmān er-Raḥīm*" ("In the Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful") the butcher cut the ram's throat. I must confess that I did not see this part of the performance, for I closed my eyes and blocked up my ears, telling the people to let me know when it was all over. The carcass of the animal was then hung up and skinned. The skin was, I believe, given to the butcher, in recognition of his services. A good deal of the blood was preserved in a large bowl, and the house-door was sprinkled with it, a large dab of it being smeared on the centre.

The reason for the slaughtering of the ram at a *mūlid* for a child may be that a life is thus given for a life, and so this sacrifice of the animal will ensure the life of the child.

The child's mother and some of her female relatives now set to work to prepare the meat and cook it for the large number of guests who would assemble at the house in the evening, while I retired for a short rest. At about seven o'clock I returned to the house, where great preparations had been made, and where a considerable number of visitors had already assembled. The seat of honour had been reserved for me, and soon after I arrived a sheikh celebrated for his excellent chanting of the Ḳorān entered with his assistants. I had brought a number of boxes of cigarettes with me, and some of these were now handed round by my servant, while coffee was brought for me. Newcomers constantly arrived, till every available seat had been taken, both on benches and on the floor, and then the sheikh began to recite. Such recitations are always intoned, and are repeated entirely from memory. The performer nearly always places a hand against one side of his face while he recites, and sways in rhythmic accompaniment to his chanting. This particular sheikh is renowned for his voice,

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BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

I have been told that if a woman remains for a long time after marriage without the prospect of a child she will pray for a son, promising that, in the event of her prayer being answered, she will have the boy's hair shaved, leaving only the tufts, which she will dedicate to the sheikh or sheikhs, or to the saint or saints, with whom she has interceded. When offering such prayers she will probably repair to the tomb of the sheikh, or to the church of the Coptic saint, to whom she wishes to appeal. I was told in Fayûm Province that if a boy is seen with his hair cut into tufts it means that he is an only son, and that this style of headdress will ensure him a long life. The initial cutting of the hair, it should be pointed out, is performed at home.

Among the Copts the rite of circumcision should be observed before baptism, according to Dr Butler.[1] The actual ceremony closely resembles the Muslim rite, so that the following description applies to the followers of both religions, the only difference being that whereas the Coptic child should have this operation before baptism, for the Muslim there is no limitation as to age, though it is always carried out during the early years of a child's life. The ceremony entails a certain expense, and is therefore sometimes carried out conjointly with a marriage ceremony, so that the cost may be shared.

The boy who is to undergo this operation has his hands and feet dyed with *ḥenna* at sunset two days before it takes place. On the following day the barber comes and cuts the boy's hair in a particular way, called *mukarraṣ*, which means 'made into little loaves or cakes.' I do not think that this form of hairdressing is in any way connected with the tufts of hair described above. After the haircutting the boy is washed, and, so I was told, coins are put on his face. This is probably the same custom as is observed at weddings, when the female visitors who wish to present the bride with small sums of money go up to her and place the coin they wish to give to her on her upturned face. In the case of the boy the money presented in this way is taken by the barber. The boy then has a particular kind of felt cap placed on his head. This cap, which is white in colour, decorated with yellow designs and tassels (Fig. 40), is purchased by the parents especially for the occasion, and worn only for this rite. The cap is further decorated by the attachment of scraps of coloured paper or bits of cloth or muslin. The boy, thus attired, is then placed on a horse, usually, I believe, with his face toward the animal's tail; he is covered up with a shawl, and, with one man holding him securely and another leading

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F [118]
F [761]
F E 852 304
E [302]
E [463]
E [431] [465]
F C [292]

[1] See my article in *Man*, vol. xxv, p. 263.

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solemnly stepped over them backward and forward seven times. Four charms in all were used, representing the head of Isis, a mummified divinity, a scarab, and a cat (Fig. 44). When this was accomplished the lower jaw-bone of an ancient Egyptian skull was placed on the ground. The same ceremony was yet again performed, being repeated with two complete ancient Egyptian heads, one a well-preserved mummified head, the other a skull. A glass of water was then brought, into which the blue glazed charms were dropped. Each woman drank some of the water, and then picked out the charms and sucked them, and some rubbed their bodies with these magical objects, and also applied the water to their persons.

It may interest my readers to know that on my return to Egypt the following year one of the first items of news communicated to me by my servant was that at least two of the women who had had resort to my charms would shortly bear children.

Great efficacy is attached to the Pyramids, and childless women will repair to one of them and walk round it seven times, believing that this perambulation will assist them to become mothers. Women sometimes beg to be allowed to remove small portions of the decorated walls in ancient tomb-chapels to assure their bearing children. It appears that ancient things in Egypt are credited with great potency in this respect, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain any reliable information from the people themselves as to why they attach such magical power to antiquities. The stepping over the tomb-shaft suggests a belief in reincarnation, and this belief does exist among the peasants, as will be seen later on; but there is also the idea that *barakeh* is attached to anything that is old, or sacred, or even peculiar. The word *barakeh* means blessing, and *barūkeh* is a lucky coin, a thing to bring good luck.

Women who have no children will sometimes visit a sheikh's tomb, entreating him to intervene on their behalf, and vowing to make some gift in return if their wish is granted. A cord or cords are often to be seen hanging across the inside of such a building, and from it are suspended a variety of objects, including coloured handkerchiefs. These are, in many cases, the votive offerings of women, which they have hung up in the tomb when their prayers for offspring have been answered.

Lane[1] records the practice of visiting tombs or mosques to obtain

[1] *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London, 1871), vol. i, pp. 300 f.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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782 a blessing, or to urge some special petition, such as the gift of children. He states that the suppliants believe that a more favourable reception to their prayers will be granted if offered up in such sacred places.

842 778 123 *Barakeh* is also occasionally believed to be possessed by, or attached to, living people. Over and over again women have come up to touch me because they believed I had this virtue. Among the numbers of women who in 1926 came to me to step over the blue glazed charms which I always take about with me was a young married woman who was in a state almost verging on madness because she had no children. Five years ago she had given birth to a child which survived only a few hours. Since then she had had no hope of becoming a mother. She was in a desperate plight, and her fears were increased because she suspected that her husband would shortly divorce her as there seemed to be no prospect of a family. She begged and entreated me to help her, so I suggested the charms, over which she stepped seven times. She came a second and a third time, becoming more and more frantic as time went on.

The last time she visited me she said, "O gracious lady, I know you *can* help me if you will; we all know you have so much *barakeh*!" She then seized my hand, pressing it against her, and saying, "You *can* give me *barakeh* if you will!"

I expressed my sorrow for and sympathy with her, and she took her departure. Not long after I heard from one of her fellow-villagers that her wish was at last realized, and that she had hopes of becoming a mother. It was all put down to me, and she called it *my* child! Many people after this came to me from her village for the same purpose, and all, so I heard, met with the same success. The population of that village should be appreciably increased through my supposed *barakeh*!

842 769 It is a popular belief in Egypt that if a dead child is tightly bound in its shroud the mother cannot conceive again. Therefore the shroud and the cords binding it are always loosened just before burial, dust also being put in the child's lap. The dust is put there, so I was told, in order to keep the body lying on its back. The woman who gave me this information said that sometimes a body twists round when decomposition sets in, and if this happens the mother cannot have another child. If, in spite of precautions, the woman as time goes on seems to have no prospect of again becoming

842 775

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
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764 ghost of the deceased away from the village. I am told that it is merely the way of making it known that a death has taken place.

When the corpse has been washed it is wrapped in cotton or silk cloths, the first wrapping being usually white, the outer green. [822] [192] Green is the sacred colour among Muslims, being associated with the Prophet Muḥammed. His descendants, or perhaps I should say those who lay claim to be such, very often wear a green turban.

[291] [55]

FIG. 50. WOMEN WAILING OUTSIDE AN ENGINE-HOUSE, WHERE A BOY HAD JUST BEEN KILLED

Note the uplifted arms of the dead boy's mother, in the centre, a characteristic attitude of grief. See below, p. 236, and Fig. 137.

The Muslims do not bury in coffins. The corpse, when wrapped, is laid on a bier with low sides, and this is covered with a shawl by way of a pall. The sex of the deceased is indicated by slight differences in the draping of the shawl.

764 When a man or a woman dies a ram must be killed and some of its blood sprinkled on the place where the death occurred. If 705 this is not done the *rūḥ* (soul) will remain in the house and cannot 185 go to heaven. If the people are too poor to afford a ram a kid 805 is killed instead. When the father of a rich man whom I know died a ram and some other animals were killed at the house, and, [831] in addition, a camel was slaughtered near his grave and the meat distributed among the poor

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

DEATH AND FUNERARY CEREMONIES

The clothes which the man or woman wore when he or she died must be washed, and then a *fḳīh* comes and recites passages from the Ḳorān, having the clothes close to him and one of his hands resting on them. He also recites over the place where the person died. If these precautions are not taken the *rōḥ* of the dead person cannot leave the house. When a child dies a hen is killed instead of an animal, the rest of the procedure being the same as on the occasion of the death of an older person.

I have given this information as it was repeated to me, but I

FIG. 51. STRING OF WAILING WOMEN IN A FUNERAL PROCESSION

fancy that it is really the *'afrīt* of the dead person that is meant in this statement, not the *rōḥ*, which is the soul, the *'afrīt* being the ghost, and quite separate from the *rōḥ*, according to the popular belief.[1]

The corpse is borne to the grave by four male bearers, who are constantly changed during the procession to the cemetery, for to assist in thus carrying the dead is considered a pious act, and he who performs it thereby acquires considerable merit. The funeral procession is headed by men, those who are relations walking as near as possible to the bier. Immediately behind the bier walk the female mourners (Fig. 51), their faces, hands, and arms dyed blue, and their heads, breasts, and arms plastered with mud; they hold handkerchiefs, usually blue or black, and sometimes green, which they wave in the air as they give vent to their piercing

[1] See below, pp. 237 ff.

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

selves outside the doorway, where they are joined by friends, all observing almost complete silence, except on arrival, when they may say, "*El-bakīyeh fi ḳaydtak*"—literally, "May what remains over be in your life!"—*i.e.*, "May the rest of the days of the dead be added to your life!"

The female mourners, including the professional wailers, congregate together, either inside the house or in some secluded spot outside. Here they continue to utter their piercing cries, and usually also engage in a dance. The dancers, each one swaying slightly backward and forward, move in a circle, smiting their cheeks the while with both hands in rhythmic accompaniment to their chanting and cries. I have seen women thus beating their cheeks till blood flowed. One of the dancers often beats a *nadam*, a single-membrane drum, resembling a tambourine, but without jingles.

The mourning ceremonies are continued for seven days, though very occasionally they may last for three days only. The first evening after the burial *fuḳahā* come to the house, one of them bringing a large rosary, called a *sibḥeh*, consisting of five hundred to a thousand large beads. They repeat passages from the Ḳorān a thousand times, keeping count of the recitations by means of the beads. The merit of this religious exercise is conveyed to the deceased. During the period of mourning *fuḳahā* come daily to the house to recite the Ḳorān, but the ceremony with the rosary is performed on the first night only.

The *fuḳahā* are usually given a small sum of money for their services, and also at intervals in their recitations they are refreshed with coffee and cigarettes, but no one, either performer or listener, would ever think of smoking while they are in progress. I have been present several times on such occasions, and have been much impressed by the excellence of many of the voices, as well as by the reverent attitude of all the people present. The *fuḳahā* sit cross-legged on a bench inside the house, and, as they recite, sway from side to side, holding one hand against one side of the face. One of them usually acts as leader, and the others join in as a chorus; or sometimes the chief *fikīh* will tell one of his subordinates to take his place and recite. The recitations last for an hour or more.

On the seventh day after a death the mourning at the house ceases, and the women, accompanied by their male relatives, visit the grave. They bring loaves of bread, called *kaḥk*, which are

DEATH AND FUNERARY CEREMONIES

either round and somewhat flat or ring-shaped. A number of very poor people and *fuḳahā* follow the mourners to the cemetery. The bread is given away to the poor in the name of the dead, and the *fuḳahā* also receive their share in return for recitations from the Ḳorān at the graveside. These men may receive small sums of money for their services in addition to the gifts of bread. The visit is repeated on the fifteenth and fortieth days after the death (see also pp. 117 ff.)

It is customary to engage two or three *fuḳahā* to give recitations regularly two or three times a year in a house where a death has taken place, to ensure the welfare of the deceased. Some people arrange for even more frequent recitations.

I will now briefly describe the various kinds of graves I have seen. The structure varies according to the nature of the ground in which the cemetery is situated. In some parts of Egypt the dead are buried along the lower desert. In this case the grave is not usually prepared beforehand, but a number of men, carrying the necessary implements for digging, accompany the funeral procession. When they arrive at the selected spot the bier on which the body lies is placed on the ground, and a shawl is fixed on sticks stuck into the ground to act as a temporary wind-screen. The diggers then set to work, and, after removing the covering of sand, dig a rectangular pit in the underlying limestone rock, oriented east and west. On the south side of the pit[1] a recess is cut, large enough to admit the corpse, which is lifted into its last resting-place by some of the men present, and with its head toward the west—*i.e.*, looking east toward Mecca. The recess is then bricked over in such a way that a chamber is formed of sufficient size to admit of the deceased sitting up in it. This is necessary on account of the belief that when the two examining angels visit the grave on the first night after burial the dead must be able to sit up while they question him. For this reason also the cords or tapes which are bound round the wrappings of the dead must be unfastened as soon as the body is laid in the grave. When the recess has been bricked over the pit is filled up and the sand piled in a mound over it, palm-branches being stuck into the sand to surmount the whole.

Sometimes instead of the mound of sand a brick superstructure such as is described below is erected above the grave. The above-

[1] So in the case of two interments that I have witnessed.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt
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Scriptures. After interminable readings and chantings there was a pause, and one of the mourners present clapped his hands, thus commanding the attention of every one in the church. He then began the funeral oration, extolling the dead man and mentioning many of his good deeds. He spoke with great fervour and sincerity, though he was himself a Muslim, and I much admired his restrained gestures, his fluency, and his clear enunciation. He was really a good speaker and entirely devoid of self-consciousness. After the speech was ended the candles were put out and removed from the sides of the coffin, the lid was replaced, the bearers hoisted the coffin on to their shoulders, and, preceded by the priest and the *'arīf*, walked three times round the church, followed by all the mourners. After the third perambulation they came down the centre of the building, and so out of the church to the place of burial.

There is no service at the grave among the Copts, and after loud-voiced and conflicting advice from every man in the crowd assembled round the grave the coffin was at last successfully lowered to its final resting-place, a vault in which a number of interments had already been made. Finally the opening to the vault was bricked up and the earth flung back into its place again, and we all set off for our several abodes.

The mourning at the house usually lasts for seven days, as with the Muslims, though the period is sometimes reduced to three days only. During those seven or three days, according to one of my Coptic informants, no food is cooked in the house of mourning, but supplies are brought in by village friends. According to the same informant, prayers are offered up in the church by the priest on the third, seventh, fifteenth, and fortieth days after a death; these prayers are believed to be the means of saving a lost soul. During the fifteen days the house of mourning is not swept, but no reason was given for this custom.

On the third day after a death has taken place a priest, attended by the *'arīf*, goes to the house of the dead man or woman. Some of the uneducated Copts believe that the priest on this occasion dismisses the soul of the dead person from the house, where it is believed to remain until that day. I was present for this ceremony after the death of the Copt whose funeral I described above. As his relations were very poor people the ceremony was doubtless far less elaborate than it would be in the case of people in a better position.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

threshing-floor, either *faṭīr*, *kunāfeh*, or *rashteh*, or cooked meat. He stands up on one of the heaps of grain and calls out to his

FIG. 102. CARRYING CORN TO THE THRESHING-FLOOR

friends, "Come and eat," and he fires off his gun as a sign of joy. When his friends have eaten he places some of the food that is over

FIG. 103. THRESHING WITH THE NŌRAG

around and in the heaps of grain. This, it is believed, will bring a blessing and a plentiful supply of the grain; also, so the peasants

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

FIG. 104. CARRYING AWAY THE STRAW

believe, it will satisfy the *ʿafārīt*, who will eat some of the food thus placed for them. If the owner neglected to do this the *ʿafārīt* would take some of the grain.

This custom, as well as that mentioned before, of placing bread among the heaps of winnowed grain suggests a belief, at some period, in a corn-goddess, to whom offerings had to be made. So far as I have yet discovered there is no trace of such a belief left in the minds of the peasants, but these ceremonies certainly suggest the possibility of an earlier belief in some fertility or earth-goddess, and the name given to the last time of irrigating a field (i.e., *el-fiṭāmeh*) bears out this idea.

FIG. 105. HARVESTING-FORK

[Text continues on p. 180]

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

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Mu'awwad; another is a man called el-Akhras (the dumb one), while two others are women, one of whom bears the name of el-Ḥaggeh. The last-named is the most important of all, but she never comes up above ground, and Zedimāl is her servant.

This magician, I learned, must always be very clean both in her person and in her clothes. If she wears a single garment that is dirty the male familiar, el-Akhras, comes up from beneath the earth and possesses her. He seizes her so that she falls on to the ground, shaking all over, and is unable to eat or move. On such occasions her sons will sit down near her, begging her to tell them what is the matter. Then Zedimāl comes up (I was not told how she was brought up) and stops all the anger. The magician must at once remove the dirty garment and put on clean clothes. There are only two colours, besides black, that she may wear—green and red. When I went to Egypt last autumn I took her a silk handkerchief. I chose a purple one, thinking that that colour would be a suitable one for a widow, but this had to be changed for one of the two colours permitted to her.

FIG. 114. THE FEMALE MAGICIAN WHO HAS FIVE FAMILIARS

A *ṣulḥeh*[1] is a sort of peace-making feast, and it is sometimes held by people who have appeased the sheikh or sheikheh by whom they may be possessed. When a man wants a *ṣulḥeh* this woman magician dresses in men's clothes and wears a silk scarf such as is worn by the men, and carries in her hand a stick with a silver knob. If it is a woman who requires the *ṣulḥeh* the magician wears her own clothes. This ceremony is described later (p. 199). When I last saw this magician there was trouble between el-Akhras, her male familiar, and his *ukht*,[2] for each person beneath the earth has an *ukht*. El-Akhras wanted to have a *ṣulḥeh*,

[1] *Ṣulḥ* = peace; *ṣālaḥ* = to make peace with.

[2] See pp. 74 ff.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

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sharing it with his *ukht*, but the latter was angry and refused, saying that she was greater than he, and must have the sacrifice of a ram to herself, demanding also that her *ṣulḥeh* should come first. The magician could not then afford to buy two rams for the double sacrifice, so matters were delayed, and nothing could be done while I was in Egypt.

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This female magician is called in to help and give charms and advice on all manner of occasions. If a woman is suffering from sheikh-possession she will consult the magician as to why the sheikh is thus troubling her. A woman whom I have known for some years was afflicted in this way, and the magician was called in to advise. I was present at the time and witnessed the whole ceremony. The magician, having heard the woman's account of her trouble, went into a corner of the room and was covered all over with a blanket. After muttering to herself for some time she suddenly clapped her hands and began a conversation with her familiar Zedimāl. Salutations were passed between Zedimāl and all those present in the room, including myself, and then the magician asked why the sheikh was troubling the woman. It was explained that the sheikh demanded a pair of gold earrings, which the woman he possessed was to wear, and also a new *gallabīyeh* (dress), yellow in colour, also to be worn by the woman. If these were obtained the sheikh would be appeased. The husband of this woman was a poor man, but the gold earrings and the new dress had to be bought, and would be paid for by degrees. Shortly after this I was in the village again and inquired how the woman was. I was informed that the earrings and dress had been purchased, but that she was still troubled, though not to the same extent. She had again inquired of the magician, and I believe the sheikh had demanded more, but I never heard all the details!

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In a small village in Upper Egypt there are two magicians, one a Copt, the other a Muslim. They are both clever, and both are in great demand, their fame having spread far beyond their native province. They are friends of mine, and have told me a number of the devices and charms used by them on various occasions. An inscribed charm obtained from magicians is usually enclosed in a small leather case, and hung by a cord of plaited leather or a string round the neck or waist of the person for whom it has been prescribed (Fig. 115). The following information was obtained from the two men mentioned above.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927.
MR13 Fellahin MR13
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Copts MR10

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magician dismissed her and she vanished. The woman had been brought from a village about three miles off, and, on inquiry, my acquaintance found that, at the time when she had been brought before them, she was making bread in her house, when her dress would, of course, be covered with flour! After this remarkable exhibition my acquaintance told me that he felt that the magician really had some extraordinary powers.

The object of one of the spells possessed by my magician friend is "to make a king or any governor merciful to his subjects, and to ensure his granting any request made to him." To make such a spell effective the following procedure is adopted. At sunrise the magician makes a fire of wood, or, perhaps, charcoal, or cow-dung,[1] but not of *būṣ*. In this fire he will put two kinds of incense, ordinary frankincense and incense scented with musk. While the incense is burning the magician will repeat the names of the angels who are in the fourth heaven, and the name of their leader, seven times. The name of the leader of the angels in the fourth heaven is Kilīmya.

After he has finished this repetition he pronounces a formula beginning: "O angels, and leader of the angels of the fourth heaven! O Sun, which gives light all over the world!" Then he again addresses the sun, saying, "I pray you, O Sun, for the sake of the chief king [or governor, as the case may be, mentioning also his name and the name of his mother] that you may make his heart kind to so and so [*i.e.*, the suppliant]." Then the magician writes a charm and gives it to the petitioner.

The charm consists of a repetition of the names of the angels in the fourth heaven, and it must be worn under the left arm. Such charms are usually enclosed in a small leather case, which is suspended by a cord from the neck in such a way that it hangs underneath the arm.

If a man wishes to injure an enemy by making him unconscious he will go to a magician, who will tell him to bring some *ʿurūḳ el-fūweh* (roots of madder), the seeds of leeks, the fat of a crow, the fat of a tortoise (*fakrūn*),[2] and onion seeds. These ingredients, I am told, can be purchased at the shop of a village grocer. He must then light a fire and throw into it the five articles mentioned above. The smoke coming from this fire will make anyone who

[1] See pp. 154 f.

[2] Professor Margoliouth tells me that *fakrūn* is a Berber word, so possibly this particular magical receipt was brought into the country by Arabs or Moors.

MAGICIANS AND MAGIC

This time the sheikh said, " I want silver anklets and nice clothes, and she must not be miserable."

After a week the ceremony called *ṣulḥeh* (p. 186) was celebrated, the procedure being as follows. A sheep is killed, and some of its blood is put on the dress of the woman who is possessed, the people singing and playing their musical instruments all the time. Seven candles are brought and placed round a large brass tray set in the centre of the room, either on the floor or on a stand. Seven kinds of sweetmeats, including dates, almonds, and raisins, are heaped up in the centre of the tray and covered with a bowl, on the top of which is placed one of the candles. All the seven candles are now lighted, and the people present, including the patient, eat, an extra supply being offered to the officiating magician, male or female. One of the people present hands the magician a five-piastre piece, which he dips in the blood of the sheep. At the *ṣulḥeh* held on behalf of the above-mentioned woman it was her brother who gave the money. The coin is wrapped in a piece of cotton stuff and given to the possessed man or woman, who will have it enclosed in a leather case and wear it always hung from the neck and passed under the left arm. This is a charm, and is supposed to be a present to the sheikh who possesses him or her. Such a charm is called a *lāzimeh* (an obligatory gift).

On one of the occasions when I was present at a *zār* a man came in, sat down for some time, and then went out. I was told afterward that his sheikh did not like the songs that were being sung, and so he could not remain in the room. When one of the possessed women who was present at this *zār* stood up and danced she began to bark like a dog, and her whole expression changed, her face becoming drawn and haggard. On another occasion a man became very violent, hurling himself about and striking out, so that it took three or four other men to hold him. When once this fit of excitement had passed his face assumed a calm and placid look.

Women on these occasions wear special ornaments (Fig. 120), if they can afford them, and must wear good clothes. People who are possessed by sheikhs are often supposed to be able to divine where a stolen article has been hidden. A young man of my acquaintance once lost a key. Thinking that one of his fellow-students had stolen it, he went to a man who was possessed, and, after giving him a small sum of money, asked him which of the students had stolen it. The man told him that none of them had

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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done so, but that he had dropped it inside his trunk. He went back to the school, searched his trunk carefully, and found the key, as the man had told him he would.

The *zār* is not necessarily followed by the ceremony called the *ṣulḥeh*; this takes place when a sheikh has troubled a man or woman for some time, and at last becomes appeased. It is a form of peace-making between the sheikh and the person he possesses. If anyone is possessed by more than one sheikh it is not necessary to kill more than one sheep at the *ṣulḥeh*; one victim appeases them all.

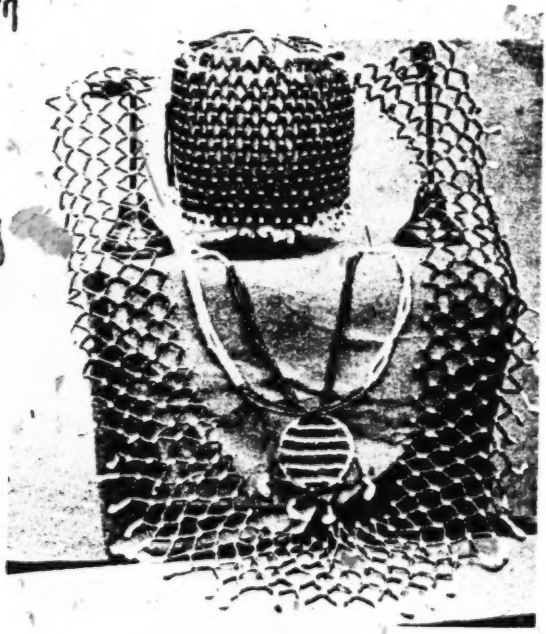

FIG. 120. ORNAMENTS—BELT, PENDANT, AND CAP—SOMETIMES WORN BY A WOMAN AT A ZĀR
The beads are green and white.

This belief, that it is possible to be thus possessed by a sheikh, is a very baneful one. The women who suppose themselves to be thus affected become exceedingly hysterical, and their husbands, for fear of the consequences, are put to great expense. The officials are quite rightly trying to put an end to the holding of the *zār*, but to suppress this ceremony completely will be difficult, as the beliefs associated with it are so deeply rooted in the peasants' minds.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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to detect any trickery. A friend of mine told me that he had been equally puzzled. I should mention that as he rubbed the child's eyes he repeated the *Fātiḥeh*, the first chapter of the Ḳorān.

Huskiness is supposed to be cured by the following curious performance. A boy who is well known to me was suffering from extreme huskiness of the voice. His relatives, finding that he got no better, sent for one of the village butchers. The boy was made

FIG. 126. THE 'EYE-DOCTOR' REMOVING GRUBS FROM A CHILD'S EYES

to lie down on a blanket spread on the ground, and the butcher pretended to cut his throat, placing the blunt edge of the knife against it, and saying, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," as he did so (Fig. 127). These words are also pronounced when an animal or even a fowl is killed for food. The relatives and friends present must be very careful not to repeat these words themselves, or the supposed cure would be useless. I saw the boy three or four days later, and remarked that he did not seem much better. His elder brother said it was because the butcher employed was too young. There was, however, a much older man who was very successful in effecting cures in this way, but he had not been available at the time.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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751 idea is, I suppose, that it is on the first camel that the eye would
754 be cast. A pattern is sometimes cut in the hair on one or more
822 of the legs of a camel. I was told that this is often done to keep
231 the evil eye off that part of the animal's body. For if its legs are firm and well covered with flesh some one may cast the eye over it, and the camel will fall down.

754 A certain woman in Upper Egypt who was well known to possess the evil eye saw a very fine camel coming along one of the paths in the cultivation. "Oh," she said, "what a splendid camel!" whereupon the animal fell down and broke one of its legs. The truth of this story was vouched for by my informant, who declared that he saw the accident happen and heard what the woman said.

852 If a child under eight years of age is thin and delicate the mother,
755 or, if her husband will not allow her to do so, a neighbour, will
781 carry it to the bank of the Nile on the first day of the inundation,
262 taking with her some dates and *kishk*.[1] She then stands at the edge of the water, holding the child in her arms, and makes it throw the dates and *kishk*, one by one, into the river. As the child throws in each article it must say to the water, "As you increase in depth, may I increase in strength!" After this the woman undresses the child and bathes it in the river. It is believed that the child will then grow steadily stronger. Angels are supposed to be in the water, and they, it is thought, will take the dates and the *kishk*, and, in return for these gifts, will remove the weakness from the child.

[776]

755 A child may suffer from a cough accompanied by gasping, as if it could hardly breathe. This may happen at any time until it has passed the age of seven years.[2] To cure it the mother, or grandmother (either paternal or maternal), or a woman friend, takes the child early in the morning to the enclosure (*zarībeh*) in which the sheep and goats are kept in the fields at night. She enters the *zarībeh* and hands the child over to the shepherd, who lays it on its back on the ground, and, taking a knife, places the blunt edge against the child's throat, pretending to cut it. The child will then start crying, whereupon the man will remove the knife and return the child to the woman who brought it.

000 Sheep are regarded as very gentle animals, and are supposed

[774]

[1] Small cakes, sometimes round like large marbles, and made of flour and milk.
[2] After this age the mother's *ḳarīneh* cannot injure it. For fuller information on this subject see pp. 71 ff.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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ʿAFĀRĪT

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The *ʿafārīt* are, as I have said, supposed to be made of fire, so they are naturally found in their native element. Therefore, before extinguishing, or casting anything into, a fire it is usual to say " In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," thus giving the *ʿafrīt* who may be in the fire time to withdraw. Also, before pouring water or other liquid on to the ground many people say " *Dastūr* " (" Permission ") or " *Dastūr yā mubārakīn* " (" Permission, O blessed ones "), in case there may be *ʿafārīt* near by. For should there be *ʿafārīt* in the fire at the moment that it was put out, or should the water touch them when poured on to the ground, they would take revenge on the person who had not duly warned them of what he or she was going to do.

F [791] [94]

E 26A 782 776

FIG. 135. A MAGICIAN OF MY ACQUAINTANCE

Before beginning to eat, and also before removing any food from the room in which the household stores are kept, both Muslims and Copts will say " In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful." This, I am told, is to prevent the *ʿafārīt* from taking any of the food. Copts will sometimes say " In the name of the Cross," and will make the sign of the Cross over the food, for the same purpose. Again, a woman will make use of one of these two phrases before beginning to mix the flour for making bread.

E [252]

A magician is supposed to be able to control *ʿafārīt* and to make them appear before him. He can also issue orders to their king, which the latter has to obey. The magician calls up the *ʿafārīt* from below the earth by reciting incantations, burning incense the while, and sometimes pouring out a libation of water (see p. 193).

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People who are afflicted by *ʿafārīt* regularly apply for assistance to magicians, who are often men of benevolent character, and who,

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2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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asked him where he had been, to which he replied, "I have been among the *'afārīt*."

Since that day he has been perfectly sane, and is now living happily in his native village.

The following is another case related to me in 1923, the incident occurring, so I was told, in 1920. In a town in Upper Egypt there dwells a somewhat celebrated Coptic magician, whom we will call the Sheikh B. He is known to be married to an *'afrīteh*, because he disappears every night, but neither his wife nor her children—for the people have discovered that she has offspring by the sheikh—are ever seen. They may come up above ground sometimes while people are talking about them, but they remain invisible.

The upper story of a certain house in this town was occupied by a Coptic clerk employed in a large business firm, while in the lower story lived a man whose wife had no children. The husband of this woman, distressed at having no offspring, begged the Sheikh B to come and see his wife, hoping that he might be able to give her some charm or read some incantation which would cure her barrenness. Accordingly, one evening, at a late hour, the magician arrived.

The occupant of the upper story was in the habit of praying every night and morning. On the evening on which the Sheikh B arrived this man was reciting some of the Psalms of David in a loud voice. On hearing these recitations the Sheikh B cried out, "Oh, make this man stop reading, for he is interrupting me!" Some of the people who had assembled to see the sheikh went up to beg the man to stop reciting. However, he paid no attention to their request, and read through all the Psalms, repeating them in a loud voice, so that they could easily be heard in the rooms beneath him.

The Sheikh B then cried out to him, "Oh, stop reciting these Psalms, you have burnt one of my sons"; for the sheikh had brought up many *'afārīt* from under the earth, including his own sons, so that he might consult them as to what should be done for the childless woman.

Finally the clerk went to bed; but as soon as he had laid himself down he felt that there were people in the room, and suddenly found himself being lifted off the bed. He opened his eyes, and saw four small *'afārīt*, dressed in quaint coats and trousers of many

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Copts MR10

F
782
342
241
312
776

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

Before people take up residence in a newly built house, or complete a well for a water-wheel, or use new machinery for irrigation or grinding corn, an ox or a sheep, or, if the people are poor, a fowl, must be killed on the threshold of the house, or close to the engine, or inside the well before the water-level is reached. This is done in case these spots may be haunted by *'afārīt*, who will trouble the owners if not first appeased by the blood of a sacrifice.

F
165
622
312

Within a year three people were killed by the irrigation machinery

F
291
152

FIG. 137. THE MOTHER OF THE BOY WHO WAS KILLED WAILING OUTSIDE THE 'OMDEH'S ENGINE-HOUSE

belonging to the *'omdeh* of the village mentioned on p. 235 (see also Fig. 137). One, a woman, was killed not long before I arrived there, a boy was caught in the machinery and killed during my visit, and a man was killed in a similar way just after I had left. This *'omdeh* had made no sacrifice before using the engine, so a number of the villagers went to him and demanded that he should kill an ox on the spot. This he did, about a month after I had gone, and some of the blood of the animal was sprinkled on the engine. Apparently this has appeased the *'afārīt*, for I have heard of no accidents since the sacrifice was made!

F
782
776

C
C25

There is an old Copt in that village, considerably over ninety

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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years of age, who used to be a village guard. He told a friend of mine that he knew that the ground on which the *'omdeh's* engine now stands used to be the haunt of *'afārīt*, for, when doing patrols at night round the outskirts of the village, he had sometimes seen on that spot a plough pulled by oxen and driven by a man, or sometimes a threshing-machine with the oxen and their driver, all made of fire. As this guard approached them he would cross himself, whereupon the *'afārīt* who had assumed these forms would disappear.

If a woman fears that *'afārīt* are in her house she puts a *kulleh* of water on the floor of one of the rooms, and near it she places some bread and salt, leaving them in this position during the night. This protects the whole house, and effectually prevents any *'afārīt* from entering it.

Nightmare and sleepwalking are supposed to be caused by *'afārīt*, and if a child suffers from either of these complaints it is a sign that an *'afrīt* has entered its body. This may have happened because the child has done something wrong; perhaps, so it was suggested to me, it had plucked some of the ears of corn from a field belonging to a neighbour. If a Coptic child sleepwalks or has nightmare its parents call in a priest, who tells them to bring seven *kanādīl* (old-fashioned saucer-lamps, with floating wicks). The priest then asks for a jar of water, and prays seven special prayers, burning incense meanwhile in a censer. As he finishes one prayer he puts out one lamp, after a second prayer a second lamp, and so on, till all the prayers are said and all the lamps extinguished. He now tells the parents to place the jar of water on the roof of the house, where it must remain for one night. On the following morning the child is bathed in the water, after which, it is believed, he will be cured.

Among the Muslims if a child is affected in this way the parents go to a magician, who writes a charm of protection for the child to wear.

In addition to his soul (*rōḥ*) every human being is believed to possess an *'afrīt* which leaves his body at death. In certain circumstances it may be a menace to any person who comes near it. Animals also have an *'afrīt*. This belief especially attracted my attention recently. A little dog which had been badly injured took refuge in the bathroom of my house. My servant told me that he was sure it could not live, and that, before it died, he must

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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with it. However, a tomb is not usually built until the dead sheikh appears to some one and demands such a building.

Most Muslim sheikhs of any standing have two or more tombs, or other burial sites, associated with them. This does not mean that the body of the sheikh is actually buried in any one of these sites, though there are many cases where this is so. A dead sheikh may appear to some man in a dream, or even when he is awake, and tell him to build a tomb on such and such a spot, and may even personally conduct him thither. It may happen that the inhabitants of a village possessing a venerated sheikh have been guilty of misconduct, or have offended the holy man by neglecting to pay him the respect which he considers his due. In such a case, it is believed, the sheikh will appear to a man in a distant village and instruct him to build another tomb. The new tomb often becomes more popular and is visited by a larger number of people than the older building. Thus a sheikh whose original tomb is in Lower Egypt may also be associated with a tomb or tombs far south in Upper Egypt.

FIG. 138. THE 'SERVANT' OF THE SHEIKH SAYID

Candles, or money with which to buy them, form a favourite offering. Such lights are kept burning every night in some sheikhs' tombs; in others they are perhaps burned on one night only in the week, usually a Friday. A number of votive offerings are generally found hanging on a cord or cords stretched across the interior of the building. The gifts display great variety, including glass

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and bead bracelets, bunches of human hair, handkerchiefs, first-fruits of the cornfields, and so on. Each one registers an answered prayer, for the people flock in crowds to these tombs on certain days of the week—usually Thursdays or Fridays—generally to make some special request, or with the object of being freed from some disease, which they believe the sheikh can cure. A childless woman, or persons possessed by *ʿafārīt*, will come to beg the sheikh to intercede for them. Indeed, the performances of certain rites at the tomb may in themselves effect a cure.

Having removed his or her shoes before entering the building, the visitor then walks from left to right round the catafalque erected beneath the dome three, five, or seven times, reciting meanwhile special passages from the Ḳorān. These perambulations accomplished, the servant of the sheikh takes a broom, kept for this special purpose, and carefully brushes out all the footprints in the interior of the building.

Sick animals are also brought by their owners to a sheikh's tomb, round which they are driven seven times.

In one of the provinces of Upper Egypt, on the lower desert, stands the domed tomb of the sheikh Ḥasan ʿAli (Fig. 139). It is surrounded by a low mud-brick wall, which encloses a few small trees, a well, and two or three graves, wherein relatives of the dead sheikh lie buried. Pots of *ṣabr* (aloes) also decorate the sacred spot, for this plant is believed to bring happiness to the dead. The building is whitewashed, and is decorated with line-drawings in red and blue, illustrating the pilgrimage to Mecca. The surrounding desert is covered with the graves of more ordinary folk. These are marked by heaps of sand, into which are stuck branches of palm-trees, for palm-branches, like the aloe-plants, are believed to be the means of conveying happiness to the dead who lie beneath.

The sheikh Ḥasan ʿAli was only eighteen years old when he died, but from his earliest years he was noted for his piety. He was educated at a small school in his native village, and, as soon as he had learned to read, he spent all his leisure moments studying the Ḳorān. When he died he was buried in an ordinary grave in the lower desert among his dead fellow-villagers. However, one day, when old ʿAli (his father) was squatting on a *maṣṭabeh* (see p. 32), with his head resting on his hand, his dead son appeared before him and caught hold of him by the wrist, saying, " I am very angry."

His father said, " Why are you angry, my son ? "

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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to climb down and join the festive crowds he found that he could not move, and that, when he tried to do so, his limbs were rigid and his whole body paralysed. On seeing the plight of the wretched man cries to the sheikh were immediately raised. People came with drums and tambourines, others sang and clapped their hands in rhythmic accompaniment to the music, till at last, after about two hours of such intercession, the man regained his power of locomotion, and so was able to move away.

FIG. 140. TOMB OF THE SHEIKH UMBĀRAK
The external mural decorations are to be noted.

Some time after this exhibition of his power the sheikh 'Abdu 'l-Laṭīf appeared to a man in a village a few miles distant, telling him to build him a tomb there. The people of this village went in triumph to the sheikh's native place and exultantly told the inhabitants that their sheikh had now come to them.

The original tomb still exists, but it is in a very dilapidated state, and no doubt in course of time it will wholly disappear, unless something happens to revive the veneration formerly paid to the holy man in his native village. Meanwhile, the people of the village where 'Abdu 'l-Laṭīf's later resting-place is built hold a *mūlid* every year in honour of their acquired sheikh.

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792 During the sheikh ʿAbdu l-Laṭîf's lifetime he was visited on one occasion by the sheikh Sulimān, who resided in a village some miles distant. Wherever he went the sheikh Sulimān was always accompanied by his faithful servant. On the occasion of this visit [198] the two sheikhs conversed together in an unknown language. [152] This roused the curiosity of the sheikh Sulimān's servant, who after the interview asked his master what they had been talking about. The sheikh told him that ʿAbdu l-Laṭîf had remonstrated with him for coming to his village and had bade him remain in his own neighbourhood. Doubtless jealousy was at the root of this ill-feeling.

797 A few days later the servant noticed very early in the morning 788 that his master's fingers were all burned at the tips. He immediately questioned him as to the cause of this injury, and the sheikh told him that it was his custom to go every night to all the sheikhs' tombs in the neighbourhood and light candles for them, and that while he was engaged in this pious work his fingers were burned.

798 The sheikh Sulimān is now dead, but his piety is still remembered. 766 He is buried in his native village, but six other tombs are erected 769 to his memory in various parts of the country. Moreover, the inhabitants of his village hold a *mūlid* every year in his honour.

In one of the provinces in Upper Egypt, close to the desert hills, 797 lived the sheikheh Ṣulūḥ. This woman had, during her lifetime, a great reputation for holiness, and people flocked to her, in times of difficulty, from all quarters. Her skin was very dark from constant exposure to the sun, and her head, on which she wore no veil, was covered with a crop of hair, thick and long like the wool of a sheep; from beneath her brows peered dark, sharp-looking eyes. Her clothes were scanty, consisting merely of a piece of linen rag and a sort of coat. She remained out in this desert solitude all day, and at night, so I was told, slept alone "in the mountain." As I have explained, the people call the often precipitous high-desert hills the mountain (*el-gebel*), so she probably [133] took shelter in one of the natural or artificial caves which exist in great numbers in the hillsides.

On one occasion, when a number of men and women had come 792 to consult her, one of the former asked her what had become of 787 his most valuable camel, which he had lost. The sheikheh at once 685 told him the exact hour in which this loss had occurred, and in-

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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formed him that one of his sons had stolen it and had sold it to a man in another village in the same province. She then told him the name of the man who had bought it, and said that if he went to the house of the purchaser he would be able to recover his lost property.

I was told that this information proved to be true, and the man eventually got back the camel which he had lost.

Another man then came forward, and when he had presented the sheikheh with a small sum of money she told him his name and the name of his village, though he was quite unknown to her. She also informed him that he had three sons and one daughter—a perfectly correct statement—and said, moreover, that on his return home he would find that his daughter was ill, this information also proving to be true.

This woman died two or three years ago, and crowds flocked to her funeral, men of all ranks coming to do her honour.

A certain Sheikh Ṣabr is buried in a small village in Middle Egypt, and a tree only marked his resting-place. This tree, which was large and very old, was blown down in 1926. I inquired if a tomb would now be built over the grave, but I was informed that probably no such building would be erected until the sheikh had appeared to some one and commanded him to build for him a domed tomb. I had visited this village on several occasions before the disaster occurred to the sacred tree, and was fortunate enough to secure some good photographs of it. The tree stood at the end of the village, and devotees who came to beg the sheikh to intercede for them so that they might obtain some special benefit, or who wished to be cured of headache or other ailments, would knock a nail into the trunk and then usually twist some of their hair round the nail. A cure, so it was believed, would follow this act. The nails must be virgin-nails—*i.e.*, not used before—and must be of native manufacture. Childless women also visited the tree to be cured of their barrenness. The sheikh Ṣabr is very highly venerated, and a *mūlid*, described on p. 256, is held in his honour once a year.

All these sheikhs were poor men, and the veneration shown to them is due to the virtues they displayed and to their supposed miraculous powers. The high esteem in which they hold their local saints is really good for the peasants, as it sets them some standard of conduct, and gives them a higher ideal of life than mere moneymaking and material success.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Coptic saints receive the appellation Māri (Saint), and many of the beliefs and ceremonies associated with them are similar to those connected with the Muslim sheikhs.

A Coptic saint is usually buried within the precincts of a monastery or church, which may be dedicated to him. A popular saint may be honoured by the dedication of numerous monasteries and churches to his memory, in all of which he is equally venerated.

Sometimes the same saint may be claimed by Muslims and Copts alike, in which case the grave is often situated in an open space, possibly under the shadow of a tree or trees, the lower branches of which are covered with votive offerings contributed by the followers of both religions. With the Christians as well as with the Muslims candles are a favourite form of votive offering, and when the saint is claimed by the adherents of both faiths their candles may be seen burning side by side.

Many years ago, on a spot in the cultivation in Upper Egypt where a church dedicated to Māri Mīna el-ʿAgayebi now stands, there was a square plot of *ḥalfa*-grass. This site was claimed by the Muslims as the burial-place of a sheikh. There was a very poor man who lived in the town adjoining these fields and who acted as *farrāsh*[1] at the sugar factory in the same town. One night while he was sleeping he felt some one give him a kick. This naturally aroused him, and he saw standing beside him a man whose face and form were of great beauty, and who was clothed in white garments. This man told the poor *farrāsh* that he was Māri Mīna el-ʿAgayebi, that he wished him to build a church, and that he would himself indicate the spot on which he wished it to be erected. The saint told the *farrāsh* that he had called him to do this work instead of a rich man, as the latter would boast that by his riches he had built the church, whereas the saint himself would supply the poor man with all that he needed for the erection of the sacred building.

Māri Mīna then led the *farrāsh* to the patch of *ḥalfa*-grass in the fields, and told him to measure two metres from the edge of the *ḥalfa*-grass toward the east and two metres from the edge of the *ḥalfa*-grass toward the west. Then he was to dig the whole plot thus measured out to a depth of two and a half metres. When

[1] Literally, sweeper—the title given to servants employed by the Government to keep the Rest-houses clean, also to men employed in other public buildings in the same capacity.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
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E
783

the shoes to the original owner. The shoes must always be those of a very poor *fellāḥ* who is in wretched circumstances, thus indicating the attitude of mind of the penitent man in the presence of the saint or sheikh whom he has wronged.

E
782
793

With regard to the offering of wax, it may be of interest to explain that the candles used in religious ceremonies in the Coptic church are always made by the priest himself or else by the servant who is responsible for the cleaning of the church.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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CHAPTER XVI

SOME ANNUAL FESTIVALS

796 THE *Mūlid en-Nebi*, the annual celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, is of course the most important of all the festivals held in honour of Muslim saints. However, I shall content myself here with a description of some of the annual *mawālid* (plural of *mūlid*) held in honour of local village saints which I have attended myself during my six years' sojourn in Egypt.

346 778 531 The sheikh Umbārak is buried in a village in Middle Egypt, and a whitewashed domed building has been erected above his grave. One or two of the outside walls of his tomb are, as is customary, decorated with pictures descriptive of the pilgrimage to Mecca,[1] roughly sketched in red and blue paint, the remainder [212] being inscribed with passages from the Ḳorān. Around the dome are small, what might almost be called clerestory windows, in each of which a lighted candle is placed every night. There is a [194] female 'servant' attached to this sheikh, who is supposed to keep the tomb in order, receive the donations of devotees, and light the ● [182] candles every evening. One wonders how she manages to carry out this work satisfactorily, as she is quite blind!

796 769 The *mūlid* held in honour of the sheikh Umbārak takes place in April and begins early in the afternoon, on the morning of which day similar festivals are inaugurated in certain neighbouring villages in honour of their own particular sheikhs.

At about two o'clock a large crowd collected in the vicinity of the sheikh's tomb, several people, chiefly women, seating themselves around it. The blind servant received donations from the faithful [194] on behalf of the sheikh, part of the time having the sheikh's flag wrapped around her (Fig. 141). As the donors presented their [188] gifts they recited the *Fātiḥah* in low and rapid tones. In the road which ran past the burial-ground, and in the adjacent palm-grove, the holiday-makers engaged in friendly conversation or indulged in various amusements (Fig. 142); and along the roadside booths

[1] See p. 245, Fig. 140.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

land. Such suppliants are constantly arriving to receive their donations during the whole of the first day of this festival, while coffee, sweets, and cakes are distributed to other friends who come to pay visits of congratulation. Prayers are offered in the mosques, which are filled with worshippers. On the first day of this festival all who can afford it sacrifice a ram (thus calling to mind the ram substituted for Isaac) outside the house, and sprinkle some of its blood on the house-door.[1]

FIG. 147. A CEMETERY CROWDED WITH VISITORS ON THE DAY OF THE LITTLE FESTIVAL

Once when visiting the house of some of my village friends I found that not only was such a sacrifice in prospect, but another ram was also to be killed for the following reason. The woman's only son had been very ill some two or three years before, and in her despair she had made a vow to some sheikh that if her son recovered she would kill a ram as a thank-offering on the first day of *el-ʿĪd el-Kibīr* every year for the rest of her life (Fig. 148). The blood of this animal, however, was not sprinkled on the door.

Again on this festival the cemeteries are visited by crowds of people, many carrying palm-branches to be placed on the graves.

[1] *Cf.* the ancient Semitic custom of sprinkling blood on the doorposts, exemplified in one of the ceremonies of the Jewish Passover.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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SOME ANNUAL FESTIVALS

Gifts of food are distributed by the visitors in the names of their dead; in fact, the funerary customs observed at this festival are identical with those connected with *el-ʿId eṣ-Ṣughaiyar*.

The first day of *Khamasīn*, which falls in April and is called *Shemm en-Nesīm* (the Smelling of the Zephyr), is observed in the following way. Early in the morning a bunch of onions, or a single onion, is hung up above the house-door. The owners of the house, more especially the women, may smell the onions before

FIG. 148. RAM TO BE SACRIFICED AT THE GREAT FESTIVAL IN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF A VOW
The mother who made the vow stands beside the animal.

hanging them up. I was told that in some parts of Upper Egypt the onions, after being hung up, are squeezed or beaten with a stick, so that the juice from them may fall on the threshold. I have also been told that this custom is observed because it is believed to make people strong. I have heard, moreover, that in other parts of the country on the night before the festival people hang a bunch of onions over the places where they sleep. Early on the following morning each person on rising immediately takes his or her bunch of onions, smells it, and then throws it over his shoulder, after which he walks out of the house without looking back. My informant said it is believed that all evils are

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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in an inscription of Ramesses III at Medînet Habu,[1] and the Egyptian peasants seem to have been wearing a garment very like the latter, only sleeveless, by the early Ptolemaic period, judging from the reliefs in the tomb of Petosiris at Derweh ;[2] but the *gallabīyeh* may date back even to the Sixth Dynasty.[3] It should be observed that women wearing veils on their heads like those worn by the modern peasant women in many parts of Egypt occur several times in those reliefs in the tomb of Petosiris that are executed in Greek style.[4]

It might here be mentioned that blue was the colour for mourning in ancient Egypt,[5] and that dark blue as well as black is still the mourning colour in modern Egypt (see pp. 50, 111, 264, 295).

I have not, as I should, referred in the previous chapters to the custom of washing before and after a meal and before private and public prayers. This is a very old custom and is often referred to in the ancient Egyptian literary and religious texts.[6]

It was evidently considered as important to have a large family in ancient as it is in modern Egypt (see p. 97). The sage Anii advises his son to "take a wife when thou art a youth, that she may give thee a son. Thou shouldst beget him for thee whilst thou art yet young, and shouldst live to see him become a man [?]. Happy is the man who hath much people, and he is respected because of his children."[7]

Several of the ceremonies connected with birth can be shown to be of ancient origin. Apart from the reference in the Old Testament,[8] the existence of professional midwives in ancient Egypt is suggested by the account of the birth of the divinely begotten triplets of Red-djedet in the tales of *King Kheops and the Magicians*, which dates from the time of the Twelfth Dynasty (2000–1788 B.C.).[9] In earliest times the Egyptian women squatted to

[1] J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iv (Chicago, 1906), § 47.
[2] M. G. Lefebvre, *Tombeau de Petosiris*, vol. iii (Cairo, 1924), Pls. XII–XV.
[3] See W. M. F. Petrie, *Deshasheh* (London, 1898), pp. 31 f.
[4] M. G. Lefebvre, *op. cit.*, Pls. XIX, XX, XLXVI.
[5] A. H. Gardiner, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, vol. xlvii, pp. 162 f.
[6] For a number of interesting references see A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, pp. 477, 480 f., *Luxor and its Temples*, p. 7, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. v, pp. 153, 154 and note 5.
[7] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 235.
[8] Exodus i, 16.
[9] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, pp. 44 ff.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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second of the famous contracts of Djefaiḥap engraved on the walls of his tomb-chapel at Asyūṭ the following passage occurs:

> That which he [Djefaiḥap] gave to them [the priesthood of the temple of Upwawet of Asyūṭ] in return [*i.e.*, for bread presented to his statue]

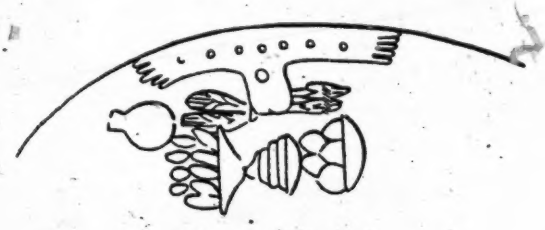

FIG. 182. AN ANCIENT 'BRIDE OF THE CORN'
After Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Nakht at Thebes*, p. 63.

> was one *ḥeḳat* measure of northern barley for every field of the endowment [*pr-ḏt*], from the firstfruits of the harvest of the nomarch's estate, just as [or in the measure which] every commoner of Asyūṭ gives of the firstfruits of his harvest, for he was the first to cause every one of his peasants to give it to this temple from the firstfruits of his field.[1]

The offering of the firstfruits to the *mueddin* and the *fuḳahā* is perhaps a survival of the custom referred to in the above quotation, the *mueddin*, the *fuḳahā*, and the mosque taking the place of the priests and the temple. The *fiḳīh* in his funerary functions corresponds exactly to the ancient 'lector' (*ḫry-ḥb*).

FIG. 183. AN ANCIENT 'BRIDE OF THE CORN'
After Norman de Garis Davies, *ibid.*

The custom of putting loaves of bread in the heaps of wheat (p. 173) may be a survival of the offerings originally made to the

[1] G. A. Reisner, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. v, p. 83; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. i, § 546.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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corn *ʿarūseh*, of which mention has been made above. Or both this custom and that of bringing food to the threshing-floor and, after distributing it among friends, placing what is left in the heaps of *dura* to satisfy the *ʿafārīt* (pp. 176 f.) may be a survival of the presentation of offerings to the harvest-goddess Ernūtet. Such offerings to Ernūtet are often depicted in tomb-chapels of the New Kingdom. Thus Zeserkereʿsenb is shown making food-offerings

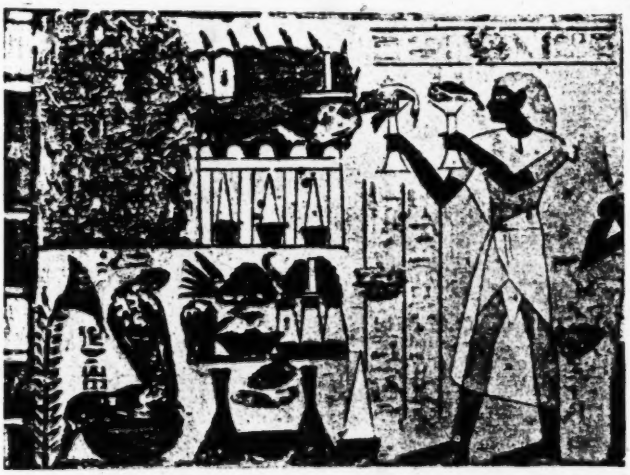

FIG. 184. MAKING OFFERING TO ERNŪTET
After W. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Pl. 143.

to that goddess "on the day in which the barley is measured, Pharmuthi 27th" (Fig. 184).[1]

In the tomb-chapels of Khaʿemḥēt[2] and Nakht (Fig. 181) victuals of various sorts are represented as lying close to the threshing-floor, evidently an offering to the harvest-goddess, but at the same time reminding us at once of the custom still observed in connexion with the threshing of the *dura* (pp. 175 f.).

The paying of the harvesters and ferryman in kind (pp. 173 f., 180) finds many a parallel in ancient Egyptian records.[3] It is to

[1] See also J. G. Wilkinson, *The Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i, pp. 348, 385; A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 520.
[2] W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Pls. 189, 194.
[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 591; T. E. Peet, *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, vol. vii, p. 82.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Ancient Egypt MR5

THE FELLĀḤÎN OF UPPER EGYPT

On pp. 189 f., 193 ff., 198, 229, 232, and 237 I speak of incense being burned, and of water being sometimes simultaneously poured out as well (p. 229), during the recitation of spells by a magician. As we learn from existing copies of the ancient Egyptian funerary liturgy and from the reliefs and paintings depicting its performance, incense was burned and water poured out at stated intervals during the recitation by the lector of the formulæ appropriate to the various episodes of which this liturgy was composed.[1]

On pp. 192 ff. I describe how a magician brought a woman from a distant village to the room in which he recited the spell summoning her. Similarly, we read in *The Second Tale of Khamuas* that an Ethiopian sorcerer brought the Egyptian Pharaoh from Egypt to Ethiopia and back again to Egypt, all in the space of six hours, and that an Egyptian magician retaliated by bringing the viceroy of Ethiopia to Egypt and back again to Ethiopia in the same space of time.[2]

Wax figures such as those mentioned on p. 197 were also used for sinister purposes in ancient Egypt.[3]

Superstitions about the evil eye evidently existed in ancient Egypt, but references to them are very rare in the literature, as has been pointed out by Dr A. H. Gardiner.[4] However, in the library of the temple of Horus at Edfu there was a book containing "spells for driving away the evil eye," and in a well-known hymn to Thōth dating from the New Kingdom occur the words: "O Thōth, if thou wilt be to me a champion, I will not fear the eye."[5]

In connexion with the statement on p. 224 that horns of sheep and other animals are hung over doors as a charm against the evil eye, a passage in the *Pyramid Texts* might be quoted which describes how the door admitting to the royal pyramid precincts was adorned with bucrania and "sealed with two evil eyes, that Osiris may come not in this his evil coming."[6]

On p. 236 I speak of the slaying of a victim on the threshold

[1] See, *e.g.*, A. M. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, Part I, Pl. X; Part II, Pl. X, p. 20; Part III, Pls. XXI ff., pp. 29 ff.

[2] F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests*, pp. 55 ff..

[3] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 407; see also J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iv, p. 209, §§ 454 f.; *A History of Egypt* (London, 1906), p. 498.

[4] *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. xxxviii, p. 128.

[5] A. Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 306.

[6] J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 26; K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, §§ 1266 f.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ANALOGIES

On p. 236 I speak of the slaying of a victim on the threshold of a new house and at the installation of a new engine or water-wheel. With this may be compared the slaying of victims—an ox and a goose—at the ceremony of laying the foundation of an ancient Egyptian temple.[1]

The unwillingness to save a drowning person mentioned on pp. 238 f. may be the last remains of an ancient belief that to be drowned was to "do the pleasure of Rē'," and that by being drowned a person was divinized, a belief to which Herodotus refers somewhat vaguely.[2] Professor Griffith wrote a very illuminating article on this subject some years ago in the *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*,[3] and my brother, Dr A. M. Blackman, has also dealt with it at some length in his *Temple of Dendûr*.[4] It is, perhaps, to be remembered in this connexion that, according to more than one account, Osiris himself met his death by drowning.[5] Possibly the water-spirit, who apparently claimed (in the end successfully ?) the foredoomed Prince,[6] is to be compared with the *'afrīt* that the modern *fellâḥīn* suppose to be claiming one who is drowning.

It is interesting to note that virtue was evidently attached to onions in ancient as it is in modern times (p. 261), for persons who took part in the procession round the walls of Memphis at the annual festival of Sokar, the funerary god of that city, had onions hung round their necks.[7] People also tied onions round their necks on the night preceding this festival.[8]

The love of listening to stories was certainly no less strong in the ancient Egyptians than it is in their descendants, as is shown by the number of folk-tales preserved to us from all periods. The existence of these stories points also to there having been professional story-tellers in antiquity as at the present day (pp. 268 ff.).[9]

[1] W. von Bissing and H. Kees, *Das Re-Heiligtum des Königs Ne-woser-re*, vol. ii (Leipzig, 1923), Pl. I, Fig. 2.
[2] ii, 90.
[3] Vol. xlvi, pp. 132 ff.
[4] Cairo, 1911, pp. 82 f.
[5] A. Erman, "Ein Denkmal memphitischer Theologie," in *Sitzungsberichte der königl. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. xliii, 1911, pp. 926 ff.; J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 25, 41.
[6] T. E. Peet, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. xi, pp. 228 f.
[7] S. Sharpe, *Egyptian Inscriptions from the British Museum and Other Sources* (London, 1837–55), Part II, p. 78.
[8] H. Brugsch, *Hieroglyphisch-Demotisches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1867–80), p. 295; *Thesaurus Inscriptionum Aegyptiacarum* (Leipzig, 1883–91), p. 1144; J. Duemichen, *Altaegyptische Kalenderinschriften* (Leipzig, 1866), Pl. XXVI.
[9] See A. Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. xxix; W. Spiegelberg, *The Credibility of Herodotus' Account of Egypt*, pp. 30 f.

F 361 they build themselves a suburb on the outskirts of a town, as at Minia for example, it bears exactly the same appearance.

Some distinction may be made between villages according to their relative importance. There are the district capitals (*markaz*), the market towns and the centres of pilgrimage; these are big villages or townlets with more business, more movement and more institutions than the others (bank, court, police station, railway station); but no fellah centre has many of the amenities of a town. At the other end of the scale come detached but still dependent hamlets, such as the *'ezbas* of the big landowners and the Bedouin settlements (*nag'*) on the edges of the cultivation.

F 511 The standard of living is practically invariable everywhere, and to study an average village is to know all the rest.

184 Let us choose a village at random and look, before we enter it, for any signs of communal life which can be seen from its outskirts.

F 361 346 In Europe it is often said that the church building gives its character to the village. In Egypt too the mosque (or the Coptic church) is the largest and most solid building, but there is nothing remarkable about it in point of architecture. Even if it has a minaret or a bell-tower, it gives no special character to the village, for it rarely rises above the poverty and mediocrity of its surroundings.

C F 779 95% of the fellaheen are Moslems. There are about a million Copts, 40,000 of whom are Catholics. They live together with the Moslems in the same villages, each group following its own faith.

F 779 771 The Moslem fellaheen, among whom neither women nor children are counted, observe as faithfully as possible the five fundamental precepts of the Koran: belief in one God, prayer, fasting, almsgiving and the pilgrimage. This much at least they know.

F ●782 796 516 Of their belief in God something will be said later on. Prayers they say after ablutions in the evening, and several times on Friday. When they hear the call of the *muezzin*, they leave the women and children in the fields, and go off to the mosque, or more often to a cleared space used as such, a square of beaten earth at the water's edge surrounded by a low wall. There they pray together, or at least go through the prescribed gestures. Squatting on the ground or on

F 782 796 516

a mat, they listen to the *maazûn*, or preacher, as he reads them a chapter from the Koran.

On Sundays the Christian fellaheen attend the interminable Coptic mass. But here worship is more of a family affair, and women take part in the prayers and chants. F C 788

The Moslems do not understand the literary dialect of the Koran, neither do the Christians understand the Coptic language of their mass. All the fellaheen from one end of Egypt to the other speak what is called 'the vulgar tongue', i.e. colloquial Arabic. This is a dialect differing a great deal in its vocabulary from those of Syria and Morocco. In Egypt there is no distinct dialect in this or that province, but only a number of variant words and expressions, and, in the South, a more guttural pronunciation, which betrays the Upper Egyptian. C F 191 198 788

Fasting is strictly observed by the Moslems in Ramadan and by the Copts in Lent. The former during the holy month abstain from all eating and drinking from dawn to sunset. The latter, for about two hundred days of the year, eat nothing from midnight to midday. F C 785 262

Almsgiving is another obligation which the fellaheen do not neglect. Within the limits of their means they fulfil it ungrudgingly, not in money but in kind. They make gifts to the blind, to ministers of religion, and to those poorer than themselves ; and this in addition to regular and compulsory presents. F 735 782 431

On the other hand, few fellaheen make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and if they do, it is at the price of heroic sufferings. The happy pilgrim, on his return after six or eight months' absence, bringing blessings from the holy places to his village, is welcomed like one coming back from the dead. His pious achievement marks him out from the rest, and his children share his renown. He is henceforward always addressed by the title of "*Hagg*" and his pilgrimage is commemorated on the walls of his house. On the white-washed front the crude outlines of men, carriages and ships are painted, with his name and the date. The same customs are observed by Coptic fellaheen who have visited Jerusalem, and thus earned the titled of "*Muqaddis*". C F 794 554 [532]

More frequented and more popular than the mosque, because there is no distinction of age or sex, is the tomb of F 778

778 the patron saint of the village, who is called 'Sheikh' or 'Wali' or 'Sidi' So-and-So.

The monument usually stands outside the built-up area, often close to a well or a canal and shaded by trees, which are themselves the objects of veneration. It consists as a rule of a cubical building about twenty feet square, topped by a dome (*qubba*), and whitewashed all over. The sheikh's body does not always lie within. There may be only
● [782] an empty tomb surrounded by palm branches, candles, shreds of cloth, bits of hair, and harvest offerings. The caretaker of the tomb is maintained by the community, or by the income of a pious foundation (*waqf*). His post is often hereditary.

796 The day of the *mulid*, or anniversary of the holy man,
527 is a great holiday for the villagers. All of them make their way to the holy spot and go through the traditional ceremonies — dances, circuit of the tomb, and incantations (50).

764 The resting-place of the dead is some distance from the homes of the living. The cemetery is always a piece of waste land, unfit for cultivation, on the débris of an abandoned village (*tell* or *kom*), or on the sand below the cliffs at the desert edge. Sometimes, as at Minia, it lies on the other side of the Nile. The village of the dead is made up of separate tombs packed closely one against the other. They may be rectangular cemented blocks with pillars at head and foot, or simply mounds sprinkled all over with white pebbles or marked by two rough stones or a couple of vertical palm branches which are renewed every year. There are no in-
[769] scriptions and no flowers, but every family knows where its dead are buried, and comes to visit them on the first day of the Great Bairam, when the whole village goes off to the cemetery to honour the dead and to feast and make holiday
[527] over their tombs. On that day the village is as empty and deserted as it is in October, when everyone has gone out to pick the cotton.

361 It is not yet time for us to go inside the village. In
312 artists' pictures of Egyptian villages there is always a pool
311 to reflect the dull mass of houses with its coronet of trees.
314 In reality this pool is a large greenish pond of stagnant water, as poisonous as it is picturesque. Nearly every village has one, almost out of necessity. To build houses, make bricks, engineer a watercourse or strengthen a dyke, local

553 rite. Three rush baskets filled with different kinds of grain
852 are brought into the room. One supports the sieve in which the infant is lying. When it is time for the bath, the midwife shakes the sieve, as if to sift both the child and the corn. Then she puts the grain back into the basket, wraps up the child and sprinkles a few grains upon it.

853 The word *fitâma*, used for the weaning of children, is
243 also used for the tenth and last watering of the maize. Sweet
431 cakes are given to the workers that day, as to the mother,
465 for it is the last day of suckling.

243 Harvest is always accompanied by symbolic acts.
777 Before reaping begins, the best ears are taken and plaited
789 into a kind of doll called the 'Bride of the Corn', which is hung up in the house to bring good luck during the ensuing year. Similarly, to bind the chain of life, the biggest grains are mixed with the seed for the next sowing, and a few fine loaves are slipped into the heap on the threshing-floor to be winnowed and sieved.

782 Mgr Khouzam, reporting on his pastoral visit in Novem-
789 ber 1937, wrote as follows: "On entering their houses, I blessed water, bread and corn. They drank some of the water and used the rest to sprinkle themselves, their cattle and their houses. The corn they flung into their fields. As for the bread, I was made to break it and eat a little of it. The rest they kept among their stores that God might bless what they had laid by."

789 The joy of harvest shines also on those who have not
465 ploughed, but whose work in the village has benefited the
431 whole community. Tradition allots the first fruits of the
735 harvest to the reciter, the barber, the cantor of the mosque,
248 the schoolmaster and the carpenter. After these have claimed their sheaves, the poor come to glean their share. Cotton-picking, however, gives rise to no sort of ceremony. This is perhaps because cotton has only recently been introduced; or because it is grown for profit and not for daily bread (**).

245 The date palm, on the contrary, is as old as Egyptian agriculture itself, and figures at all times in the life of the people. They turn to this tree for shade and for roofing, for beds and coops, for ropes and brushes. We have seen its

183
771 "*In sha Allah*".
812 "In sha Allah's no good. We're talking business, and
437 I want a definite promise".

"No *in sha Allah*, no cotton, *ya khawâga*. Good day".

771 'God will provide. God distributes His benefits. God
776 protects the crops. God is with the patient. To everyone
181 the fate which God has assigned him. We are from God, and to God we shall return. God is there. God will give in His own good time. Man proposes and God disposes. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' Such are the sentences of peasant theology. They encourage fatalism and deepen resignation, but they are often rich with all the splendour of filial obedience to the Divine Will.

776 The fellah believes in God as the Prime Mover and First
812 of all Living. In spite of the poverty of his intellect, and his ignorance in matters of religion, his conception of God is admirably pure. God is the Almighty, the Just, the Good. All attributes are united in the word the peasant uses for God, *Rabbina*, our Lord and Master. To hear a fellah utter this word is to be convinced of his faith.

771 The superstitions which enmesh his soul have not cor-
782 rupted the essence of his faith. The fellaheen are far more
785 given to prayer and asceticism than other people, for they are by nature believers. They have always been powerfully attracted by sacredness (*baraka*), the supernatural, holiness, or even the appearance of these things.

779 The Catholics among the fellaheen, whom the writer
793 knows best, can be splendidly religious in their lives, even to
771 the point of heroism. Those of their priests who are fellaheen live among them and for them with a devotion and self-denial of which missionaries from Europe would rarely be capable. It must not be forgotten that the first monks of the Christian world, the monks of the Thebaid, were fellaheen (**).

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Copts MR10

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON MOURNING CUSTOMS

Both Christians and Moslems, at the feasts of Christmas and Easter, or the Little and Great Bairam (**), have a custom of going to pray at the tombs of their dead. On these days the cemetery takes on the appearance of a market, in which people of all conditions meet together. Families are continuously arriving. The camel is used to transport the provisions, bedding, boxes and kitchen-ware. Sometimes the Nile has to be crossed. The people crowd pell-mell into ferry boats, weighing them down till they are almost awash. The children, with their best clothes on, are delighted with the journey, but the women are weeping. When they visit the cemetery for the first time after a burial they cry out in grief, calling on the dead. Some of them stain their faces with blue and wave their handkerchiefs. I have seen old women scarcely able to walk and broken down by age and sickness, dragging themselves on this funeral pilgrimage, which they feel obliged to make, and from which they may never return.

C F 765 769 C F 292 505 C F 152 302 987

Then the blood of sacrifice flows over the tomb, and the meat is given to the poor. Such libations and charitable offerings are supposed to comfort the souls of the dead. The goats and sheep, feeling their end approaching, cry aloud in despair. Yet in the dazzling sunshine, the clouds of dust, the tumult of the crowd, there is something of the holiday spirit. Hawkers temptingly display their wares, little cafés are opened, swings draw the children away. The families separate, each to visit its own. The upper part of the tomb is often built into a dome or living-space. Here the family will settle itself, to weep for hour after hour, or to sleep. Happy are the dead who are remembered, and happier still those for whom prayers are said.

C F 782 C F 265 443 764

When someone dies in the village, there is always a *mandara* (sitting-room) or a tent where the people go to offer

C F 764

some other of the saints. All this is the result of ignorance arising from girls not being educated.

[Description of the *Zār*.]

"First of all the *Kūdīya* arose and placed a chair in the middle of the room and made our hostess, the mistress of the house, sit on it. She next produced [p. 75] two hens and a cock. She tied the legs of the hens together, placed the cock on her head and the two hens on her shoulders, and began reciting the appointed rigmarole and declaiming verses, whilst the birds for fear of her were screaming and shrieking until the place shook, and all the ladies were stroking their faces and saying: 'Please, oh, Lords! Help, oh, people of Allah! Pity, oh, my Lords!' whilst she was reciting and holding in her hand the drum which is called the *bandīr* in the parlance of the *Ṣūfīs* [lit. the people of the way]. Then she began pounding upon it and uttering incantations after that fashion, until when she ceased she took down the cock and the hens, and went out to the courtyard of the house, and brought in a ram, one of the best, and ordered it to be slaughtered. When it was stabbed she brought forth a dish and caught the blood in it, and ordered the lady to drink some of that blood, and anoint her limbs with it, which she did. We were all looking at what might make one's flesh creep. For we know that blood is forbidden, as much as the dead, or the flesh of the pig. When they were finished with these shocking actions, they surrounded her, having drums, and cymbals (*ṣunūg*) in their hands, and brought her in with, I fancy, greater ceremony than she had at her wedding, smeared as she was with blood in place of the wedding ornaments, until she sat in front of the *Kūdīya* and her followers. All sat in their places, and the ladies who were invited also sat down. The assembly composed itself and coffee was brought in, and they rested for half an hour. Then they took up their drums and began beating furiously with bewildering incantation. Meanwhile the lady was kneeling in front of the drummers with her head upside down [p. 76] on the ground till one of them came with a bundle of clothes consisting of a change of men's clothing, namely, an *'abā'a* [or cloak] embroidered with gold and silver thread in the best style. They opened it and brought out a robe of

Indian silk, its ends wrought with silver, a *tarbūsh* crowned with pearls, and added to that a sword and dagger both covered with silver. She girt herself with the sword and took the dagger in her hand and bowed herself in the midst of that august assembly, the instruments playing the while. Then she trembled and said: 'Peace be upon you.' They said, 'Welcome. Who are you?' She replied, 'I am the Shaikh 'Abd al-Salām.' So they played for her in the mode usual for the Shaikh afore-mentioned.

"Then she danced a merry, pleasing dance, until when the round was finished, the leader arose and massaged her. With that the Shaikh went his way. Thereat his wife, whose name is Sitt Rukkaya, appeared and entered into the body of the woman, and said: 'Peace be upon you, ladies,' in a high tone with traces of affectation in it. Then she saluted the whole company, and demanded clothes and ornaments. They brought her seven changes of silk, each one a different colour, and each one embroidered with gold and silver thread, and upon every garment a piece of gauze (*burunguk*) of the same colour. They call it the head-veil (*Ṭarḥa*). It has old gold charms on its edges. They also presented her with gold or silver worked necklaces, bracelets, anklets, collars, armbands, and rings—much larger than the usual rings—and veils, and other things as well. Then they beat for her according to the seven modes, and with each mode she put on a different dress and variety of ornaments. And in the meantime there arose [p. 77] some of those, who had been invited, and danced with her. All their fine clothing was not inferior to what we have described; that of the beggar women (*faḳīrāt*) being of silver. If the value of what was in that place had been counted it would have exceeded seven hundred guineas in ornaments and jewels, etc.

"When they had finished that, the lady who was the wife of 'Abd al-Salām went off, after saying good-bye to the company. Then in came the little son of Shaikh 'Abd al-Salām, although in the bodily form of the woman. Then her circumstances altered and she returned to the state of childhood, and sat upon the ground playing like a child, and speaking like a child and lisping. But the artifice was evident. They played

for her the usual mode, and she was jumping about like a child until it was finished. Then the spirit went out of her to his mother. After him came in the slave whose name is Murgān[1] and began speaking in the jargon of slaves, and dancing according to his customary mode. He at length went away and the slave-woman, his spouse [the Sitt Rīḥāna], came in and adorned herself, and stood in the midst of the hall, and screamed in a frightsome manner, and said, 'I will not cook save with the silver spoon (*maghrifa*) nor will I content myself with other than the silver roller (*gandara*). And if you do not bring them to me, I will blind her and cast upon her a disease, and will not let her rise up from the earth.' Then all the ladies rose from every side and surrounded her, each one kissing her hands, and coaxing her to forgive them, which only made her more refractory and terrifying until the chief *Kūdīya* rose and made her agree to come again the following week.

[p. 78.] "At this point I asked one of the ladies at my side, 'What is this body that contains this family even to the slaves and handmaidens; and where were they formerly? And why were the man and his wife and child not present together, and the slaves standing to wait on them?' When the lady heard what I said, she stared at me in astonishment, and said, 'Be quiet, lest the Lords be angry. (Pardon, oh, my Lords!)' Then I said, 'I did not mean that. I only wanted information. Why does she not do like the rest and return whence she came?' She said, 'The devotee worked for them the necessary things except for this Lady Rīḥāna. She did nothing for her, so the latter is very angry. (Allah be praised, oh, my Lady Riḥāna.)'

"Afterwards food was brought to which the mistress of the *Zār* very cordially and politely invited the guests, after which they all departed pleased and grateful."

"Healing" by means of the *Zār*[2] acquired some fame when

[1] [This is the celebrated servant of the Jinn. The name means "coral."]

[2] [The nearest analogy to it is the Black Mass in Christendom or perhaps Voodooism. For further information consult P. Kahle: *Zār-Beschwörungen in Egypten* (in *Der Islam*, 3, 1912, pp. 1–41; 189–190; 318); also the *Moslem World*, 1913, pp. 275–289. In 1931 at the Exhibition of Modern Art in Cairo, there was on view an interesting oil painting by an Egyptian lady artist depicting part of the Zār ceremony. Tr.]

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

The manner of the act was (for the *Shaikha*) to go with the unfortunate woman, whose husband had been turned from her, to a region far from sight where the " operator " (*mushabshiba*) dyes her face and her hands with a black substance and puts on black clothing, and lets her hair down upon her shoulder and grasps in her hand three fruits. Then she takes the " patient " (*mushabshab lahā*) by her side and burns incense, placing in it *hashīsh* and *'anzarūt* (or *Anzarūt*)[1] and *mansir* (?) or *mānistir* (?) and *fahīsala* (I do not know its real medical name). Thereafter she says:

Yā 'afārīt yā 'afārīt	Oh, Spirits ! Oh, Spirits !
Yā ginn al-gibāl	Oh, Jinn of the Mountains !
Yā sukkān al-buhūr	Oh, dwellers of the seas !
Yā 'ummār al-burūr	Oh, inhabitants of lands !
Yā bu'ād fi'l-barrīya	Oh, far off folk in the desert !
Yā ḳātilīn al-darrīya[2]	Oh, slayers of offspring !
Yā mukhālifīn Sulīmān	Oh, oppcnents of Solomon[3]
Yā mubarṭi'īn fi'l-widyān	Oh, gallopers in valleys !

I cry to you. Come to me, and help me with the stars of the sky.

Then it is said that the atmosphere becomes dusty and the day is changed to night, and the darkness becomes intensified, while she continues her spell, saying:

Good evening to you, oh, stars of evening ! Oh, yellow ones like apricots ! I have smitten him with three fruits (*thamarāt*) smite ye him with three live coals (*jamarāt*). (Thereupon she names the person in the case, and casts the fruits upon an image [p. 5] of the person made of clay which is in front of her). One ember will come upon his eyes so that he will see none but her [i.e. his forsaken wife]; and an ember upon his tongue so that he will speak with none but her; and an ember upon his ears so that he will listen to none but her. Good

[1] [Gum of a thorny tree that grows in the mountains of Persia. See the *Tadhkara* of Dā'ūd al-Anṭākī, s.v. According to Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires arabes*, it is *trifolium odoratum*. Tr.]

[2] [i.e. *al-Dharriya*.]

[3] [These are the Jinn who, according to Moslem legends, were forced to assist King Solomon in his works of magic. Tr.]

evening to you, oh, our new moon! you whose father is Friday [the Moslem holy day], and whose mother is the Festival! Oh, Glorious Venus with the wakeful eyes! Take for me from the hair of so and so, the son of so and so, three hairs. Pull them off and mix them and bring them and leave them at the door of so and so the daughter of so and so. Good evening to you, oh, Sindās! (Sindās is said to be the name of the god of lust and debauchery). Oh, Sindās! Oh, Knower of secrets and of . . . (here she names a certain organ of the fair sex, which it is not allowable to mention). (At the same time the Shaikha uncovers her genital organs and brings one of her shoes and beats that organ seven times until its "servant," who is named Sindās, as mentioned above, appears). Oh, Sindās! You have helpers! Oh, Sindās! Where are your brethren! Bring him and bind him and at her door release him! (And hereupon she orders the "patient" to recite the special charm for the purpose, as follows:)

Gāga! Oh, Gāga![1] Decide this matter (*hāga*). Bring him with dust on his head and his shoe in my . . . (and she mentions an expression for one of her members which it is not fitting to mention) and his turban in my girdle (*dikka*), hearing no speech but mine. (Then the Shaikha goes back to the completion of her original spell, and points with her hand to the sky, saying:)

Oh, whirlwind! Oh, clever one! You have satans with you!

Drag him and beat him, and carry him away to the home of this poor woman, and leave him there. Oh, Ṣābī! Oh, Ṣābī![2] Oh, Hearer and Answerer! Bring so and so, the son of so and so, improved and not enraged. If he enters, well and good, and if he goes off, well and good. Let my star and his star be with you in agreement!

(At this time, it is said, the "Helpers" [or Jinn] arrive, of various shapes and appearances, and hearken to the commands of the Shaikha and go off in a hurry after paying tokens of honour and respect.)

This is the regular form of the *Shabshaba*. And if the person

[1] [Gāga is the goddess of guidance.]
[2] [The name of a king of the Unbelieving Jinn.]

with her has a nervous illness, due to the Jinn, she recites the charm herself along with some modification in the forms of the commands that issue from her Ladyship the *Shaikha*, with a slight revision of their clauses.

[p. 7.] *The true Explanation.* When I wrote my chapters in Part One on Fraternizing with the Jinn (p. 32 ff) and on the *Nazīl* (p. 30 f), I wrote them in the true belief that the Jinn could not be enslaved. That was after I studied many terrifying books in the Khedivial Library in the Darb al-Gamāmīz (Cairo)[1] constituting almost a quarter of its contents. But I was not the only one who sought what was new, out of a natural love for study which is innate in mankind. For there reached me treatises printed recently in Europe in different languages, whose authors talked about a new subject which they named Spiritism, that is, Spiritualism, or the power of employing spirits. The authors all agreed in what they related of their experiences, or what reached their ears from trustworthy sources, that it is possible to employ the immaterial in the destiny of the material. They differed only at this juncture as to whether they are animal electric rays, or spirits (Jinn) bewitching by the power of incensing and special incantations. Our objection to the holders of the former belief is that they are unable to employ these rays to influence either a person whom the medium (" influencer ") has not seen, or the medium himself. It is as if someone asked the " enchanter " to influence someone whom neither of the two knew, but [p. 8] whose name alone they heard. In spite of this they mention in their treatises that it is possible to employ this spirit for any purpose whatsoever in the case of any person they wish, whether known to them, or unknown.

As for the case of a known person, we agree with their belief, since we have seen in the matter of Envy (see Part One, p. 78] what accounts for that.

As for the holders of the second belief, namely the employment of spirits (or Jinn) by a special way, would that I knew what to say to-day to the learned ones of the civilised world who, until ten years ago, used to lay it down that knowledge was preceded by reason and fortified by experience. But " in

[1] [Now called the Royal Library and located at Bāb al-Khalq]

533
534
755
787
[171]
[292]

/81 cont'd/

and was also found in the New Kingdom of Ancient Egypt. It is further known from Abyssinia and Nubia. /82/

(d) the Sutari: a tall slim man, wearing a white "galabiah" and a big leather belt, about 20 cm wide, embroidered with cowrie shells on the upper edge and decorated with about one hundred goat-hooves at the lower edge; in front there are two mirrors. The belt is called "El-Mangur" and fixed tightly around the hips, so that rhythmical twisting produces a distinct rattling sound. (4) [535] This man leads the women in front of him during the dance; he has the same function as the "Abu-el-Leel" dancer.

There are further some women who play the duff and drums and a gourd rattle. (5) This band is specialized on the music of Sultan El-Sudani, the sultan of the red jinn and the Habashi spirits.

All three kinds of band participate in a big Zar. One after the other they play their special tunes and songs. These songs are mostly very primitive. The words refer to the Zar which is performed for the sake of sultan ...., his attention is drawn to the sacrifices and music offered on his behalf and he is entreated to pardon the patient and not to harm her (6) any more.

5. The Sultans or "El-Asyaid" (masters):

753
776

These are Jinns or spirits; they are, however, never called thus, as they are believed to be the kings and owners of land and sea, according to one of my informants. These spirits are harmful to persons they possess until their desires are fulfilled. As will be seen later on, these spirits may be classified into regional groups or families. Usually a certain group of spirits dwell in one body and it is only rarely that it is inhabited by more than one group. It is believed that a possessed individual will have to stay this way for the rest of his life, for the spirits will never leave him. The Zar-ceremony thus does not aim at getting rid of the spirit, but at inducing him not to harm the person's body, heart and brain. [755] [782]

(4) Zenkovsky S., "Zar and Tambura in Omdurman", Sudan Notes and Records, vol. XXXI, part I, June 1950

(5) Curt Sachs, p. 26

(6) Ahmed Saleh, Folklore, Cairo 1955, p. 124

/83 cont'd/

(c) Coptic and Islamic spirits: 776

1. Christian: "El-Nasrani" or "El-Dēr", i.e. the monastery
2. Moslem: "Si-Yousef" and "Umm-Nagdi"

Strictly speaking they are not really Coptic or Islamic spirits, because religion has nothing to do with it; we can only classify them thus, because of their names and the characters attributed to them.

There are still some Sultans which cannot be classified at the moment. Further investigation may prove that they belong to one of the above groups. These Sultans are "Katu" (8) and "Rinah".

As related before, the possessed person usually consults the Kūdiya who determines the special spirit in possession of the patient and performs a Zar in order to soothe this spirit. The offerings must be made different according to the kind of spirit. They can be summarized in the following three items: 755 782 [791]

(a) Sacrifices of birds, fowls or animals: The Sudanese Sultan requires a black sheep, a black he-goat, or two pigeons of reddish or dark blue colour. The Sultan of the Jinn demands a red cock, a red hen and a red calf. Sultan Rinah must be given a red he-goat and the Gabalawi a red rabbit, a calf or a deer from the mountains. The Arab again desires a camel etc. [825]

(b) Clothes of different kinds of material, shape and colour must be worn during the dance of the Zar-ceremony. In a Zar celebrated for the Sultan of the red Jinn, red silk clothes, red veils and a red head covering must be worn by the possessed person. For the Nasrani spirit a priestly black costume is needed. The Sudanese Sultan Zar necessitates a head-cover knitted with cowries and blue stones, a belt, bracelets worn on the upper arm and on the leg just above the ankles, and a stick all covered with cowries and blue stones. In the Sa'idi Zar a galabiah (men's gown in Egypt) and a stick are needed. For the "Askari" or "Lewa" it is best to employ a military uniform or cap, a stick in lieu of a gun, and green or red ribbons. For the "Arabi" bedouin clothes are needed etc. 755 292 776 [301]

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(8) In Sudan there is a Sultan called "Kaltum bint Nub" i.e. Kaltum the daughter of Nubia.

/83 cont'd/

(c) Amulets, called Hegab, pl. Ahgeba in Arabic. They are also symbolically called "Sigha" (jewelry), because they are made of silver or gold although /84/ they are amulets. These amulets, must be worn by the patient throughout his life. They are square, oval, rectangular or round "plates", with (9) rattles or stones attached. Some of them have certain words in Arabic or designs engraved. These designs may be human figures, fish, swords, stars or a crescent. They have different names, e.g. heart amulets worn on the heart, head amulets worn on the forehead; the possessed person may also wear rings on the thumbs or bracelets on their arms or legs.

(d) Candles and incense (Bükhur) which are burned during the Zar-ceremony also differ according to the spirit to which they are addressed. (10)

The Zar-ceremony

The possessed person has to take the following steps before starting a Zar-ceremony:

1. The patient must firstly consult the Kūdiya about her ailments.
2. The Kūdiya asks for some object belonging to the patient, usually a handkerchief. This is called "Attar", i.e. "trace". This will be kept by the Kūdiya for several days during which she will study it, get in contact with her spiritual world and thereby determine the particular spirit who took possession of her patient.

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(9) Similar plates with magical powers releasing from sickness and consecrated to the two gods Khonso and Ptah are known from Ancient Egypt at the time of the New Kingdom. See Erman's book "Egypt", the Arabic translation by Abu Baker and Moharm Kamel, Cairo 1952, p. 292

(10) Bukhur or incense is prepared under the supervision of the Kūdiya. It consists of Mastica, Ouda, Gawli, Murr Hijar, Kafur Tayar i.e. different kinds of aromatic woods etc. Bukhur was used also in Ancient Egypt; the priests used to begin the ceremonies in the temples by burning bukhur. See the Arabic translation of Erman. p. 295

/84 cont'd/

3. Next the Kūdiya will inform the patient whether she needs a Zar-ceremony or not. If the Zar-ceremony is decided on, the Kūdiya will tell the patient which spirit took possession of her and will instruct her about the Zar-ceremony, i.e. the amulets, clothes, sacrifices etc. required by her particular spirit. The preparatory period of about one month is used by the patient with getting ready to fulfill the desires of her spirit.

4. A week before the day fixed for the Zar-ceremony, the Kūdiya will get into contact with her special musical band and have her assistants prepared for the day. The patient is also informed of the day fixed upon. She must know of this day well in advance in order to inform any woman who has made a Zar before and, of course, her relations and friends.

5. On the eve before the Zar-day the Kūdiya goes to the patients house, accompanied by her assistants and the musical band. She prepares the following important items: Incense (Bukhur), "hennah", and "El-kursi" (literal translation: "the chair"), which is like a table placed in the centre of the room in which the ceremony is to take place. A white cloth is spread over it and a tray with dishes and bowls placed on it. They contain all kinds of nuts, dates, sweets, pies, green vegetables, vine, bread, sour milk and flowers. The table is then covered with a mosquito-net, candles are lit on it and left burning until midnight. This Kursi is similar to the table of offerings a cultural element showing a continuity for millenia dating from Ancient /85/ Egypt (11). Hennah is mixed with water and rubbed on the hands or feet where it remains for several hours, then it is washed off, but a reddish tint will remain for about one month. (12)

Then the patient is brought in. The opening of the Quoran, i.e. the first Surah, is recited, drums are beaten and the Kūdiya rubs the sick woman's body with hennah. After, any other woman present can do the same to herself. The drums are beaten until midnight. This day is called "Hennah-day".

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(11) See, Translation by Erman, p. 298/99

(12) Hennah is used as a remedy for some diseases and found also use in Ancient Egypt.

/85 cont'd/ 755 782

The Kūdiya and her followers stay overnight. About 10.00 A.M. the next morning the possessed woman takes a bird or fowl in her hand, or rides on a goat, sheep or camel, thus establishing physical contact with the animal to be sacrificed, then she walks seven times round the offering table. If she is too ill to do so, the Kūdiya will pass the birds or fowl seven times over the patient's head. During this procedure the drums are beaten, incense burnt, and "Sagharid", i.e. joyful shouts, uttered by the women. They are produced by putting the tongue between the lips, moving it rapidly and uttering shrill vibrating shouts. [801] [198]

Then the Kūdiya or one of her assistants kills the bird or other sacrificial animal near the table, the animal's blood is carefully collected in a porcelain or ceramic plate, into which the amulets and a round silver piece are placed. The silver piece bears on one side the following inscription: "Due to the permission of the daughter of the king of the earth." On the other side is written: "Oh my masters be content with me!" This silver piece is called "Eia-El-A'qd" or pact, i.e. treaty between the possessed person and the spirit. The patient will then be smeared with blood on the aching parts. The sacrificed animals are cooked, with the exception of their intestines, heart and liver. 751 755 782 789

In the afternoon the patient is bathed wearing amulets and jewelry. She then enters the hall in a majestic procession while the music plays and sits down beside the offering table. The hall is well prepared; all furniture is cleared away, mats are put on the floor and cushions placed along the wall for the guests. The Kūdiya and the musical band sit near the center wall. In the middle of the room is the offering table. When the patient sits down to it, the Kūdiya uncovers it. Three, five or seven ladies who had performed a Zar before, give the patient three pieces of bread with sour milk and one piece of cooked intestines. The patient eats this while the women will say: " 'Afia we bourhan" (health and proof) (13). The offerings 755 782 [804] [262]

(13) It means apparently: "You have fulfilled your obligations towards the spirits, let this Zar contribute towards your recovery and be it a proof of your loyalty."

/85 cont'd/ 755
will then be divided between the Kūdiya, the members of the musical 782
band and the guests. After the patient has eaten the bread, the Kūdiya wraps the silver piece with blood on it, a piece of bread, salt, sugar and Bukhur into a white handkerchief and ties it round the patient's right upper arm. It must stay there for a week. This is called "El-'Aqd", which means pact or treaty, as explained above and signifies that the patient has executed her obligations towards the spirits who must, in turn, refrain from harming her.

/86/ In the evening the Kūdiya, members of the musical band and all guests will partake of the meat of the sacrificed animal. The bones are gathered carefully and buried in the earth.

About 9 P.M. the Kūdiya burns bukhur and fumigates the pa- 755
tient's face, armpits, legs and clothes. Any other woman of the assembly can also be fumigated by the Kūdiya for money. While fumigating the Kūdiya recites something, thereby calling the spirit for whose benefit the Zar is performed, and requests the guest to recite the "opening of the Quoran." She will ask the spirit's pardon and request them not to harm the patient's body, heart and head. (14)

Then the patient wears special clothes as required by her master 755
(the spirit in possession of her), when she enters the hall the music 786
tunes in slow rhythm, controlled by the beats of drums and big frame 523
drums. Then the dancer of the band begins his task. He dances in 535
front of the patient and by his glances and movements of body and eyes charms her until she stands up and dances too. He never lets her escape from his magical or magnetical control, lets the dance get more and more frenzied and makes her imitate him. In the same way the music becomes faster, the drums louder and the flutes higher until a barbaric primitive ecstasy dominates the gathering. The dancer looks round for victims who fall an easy prey to his power. He is helped in his endeavours by drummers and frame-drummers

(14) For full details of the recitations see "Folklore" in Arabic by A.R. Saleh. Cairo/2nd edition, 1955, p. 120

/86 cont'd/ 755 786 533 535

who beat their instruments over the head of the victim until she loses her last restraint and also joins the hysterical group and eventually falls down totally exhausted. But still the demonic dancer goes round looking for new victims until there is no one left who can still dance. The music fades away and in one quarter of an hour the place is silent again. When a lady is exhausted and about to fall down, she is immediately helped by one of the assistants who hurries to lay her down, presses her head and says: "I swear to you King of the earth to forgive this patient and am ready to fulfill all your demands." The women who had been dancing utter some strange words in the Zar language which will be discussed later. [198]

After a short interval music and dancing will start again with each band playing for about one hour. The women change into the clothes demanded by every individual spirit. This will go on until midnight or 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning.

Six days later the Kūdiya again goes to the patient's house. In the afternoon she prepares a small kursi with sour milk and different kinds of sweets. Candles are lit until bed-time. Bukhur is prepared the next day and the Kūdiya unties the handkerchief. During the following year a goat or sheep must be sacrificed. 755 782

/87/ Conclusions:

1. The word: Etymologically the word Zar seems to be derived from the Arabic "Zara" = or "Ziyara" = a visit. It is probably an Arabic loan-word derived from the ancient Agao religion of the Pagan Kushites of Abyssinia, whose sky-god was called "Zar." This word is also used by the Christian Abyssinians to denote evil spirits. 755 776 [192]

   Dr. Cerulli tells us that in Abyssinia the worship of the gods of the Kushitic tribes was continued by the conquerors who only later in history brought about some changes. These gods became minor deities or nature spirits, while their former place was occupied by the gods of the conquerors; thus it happened that [171]

/89 cont'd/ 755
drums and the cries uttered can be applied also in describing a war, 781
or another Central-African dance. 177

The Kūdiya is a real medicine man who is an incarnation 756
of the spirits. The sacrifices, the smearing of the body with blood, 782
the collecting of the bones of the sacrificed animal, the burying it in 791
the soil or throwing it in the river etc... are all elements of the art 177
practiced by any African tribe. In other words, this article could
have been called: "An African Element in Egypt."

The twofold and complicated Zar-conception of Egypt is 755
due to the Egyptian cultural type. Every belief of supernatural nature 177
was combined in the Zar, even Islamic saints were added to the list
of spirits and some Quoranic words are recited.

An important factor which is responsible for the survival of 755
such an interesting practice is that it offers an opportunity for women 182
gathering and dancing, for buying clothes and jewelry, and satisfying 562
some sexual urge.

Zusammenfassung.

600

Im heutigen Aegypten sowie in Abessinien und im Sudan spielt der Glaube an böse Geister eine bedeutende Rolle, namentlich unter den Frauen niedereren Standes. Die Geister gehen in die Körper ihrer Opfer ein und nehmen sie in Besitz. Nur durch die komplizierte Zar-Zeremonie können sie besänftigt werden. Die im Zar mitwirkenden Personen und ihre Funktionen werden eingehend geschildert: die Zentralgestalt Kudiya (meist eine Frau, nur selten ein Mann), einige Assistenten und Musiker und schliesslich die Geister selbst. Die Untersuchung enthält auch eine Reihe von Hinweisen auf Altägypten.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

2.

Trust in Allah.

×539

Ya ʿēni, wel-miʿēn Alla
wes-Seiyide u-rigāl Alla;
we-ramēt el-ḥiml ʿalēk, yalla.

Thou, mine eye, Allah is the helper
And the Lady and the men of Allah;
And on thee have I cast the burden, O Allah!

[192] 1. "Mine eye" is a frequent term of affection, equivalent to "my darling". Here, perhaps, the father is speaking to the son.

2. The "Lady" is the lady Zēnab, the Prophet's granddaughter, whose greatly esteemed mosque lies in south Cairo.
[192] The "men of Allah" are the saints (shêkhs), whose graves lie scattered throughout the land.

3.

Exhortation to Prayer.

●[182] *Ya ʾalbi, ṣalli wimdaḥ Moḥammed*
illi ṣalāto manaʿit guhannim.

Pray, my heart, and praise Moḥammed,
Whose prayer has put away hell.

2. From pious Moslems.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

4.

Sing ye to the Prophet!

539x
782

The children exhort each other, even when at work on the excavations in the desert, not to forget Moḥammed, the messenger of Allah, the intercessor for mankind, but to praise him with songs, such as our numbers 5—7. (Maḥmûd called such a song "ṛuna nabawi"). Otherwise, neglect of this, brings a most terrible revenge upon the entire family.

The refrain "O Moḥammed" is sometimes used as a mere interjection, for the sake of meter; again it is a part of the sentence.

Ya-Mḥammed,
ya wallahi, ya-Mḥammed,
yabn-er-Rāma, ya-Mḥammed,
ya medallil bil-ṛamāme, ya-Mḥammed!
Lāli lāli ya-Mḥammed
fil-gabāli, ya-Mḥammed;
wil-lelētu ya-Mḥammed,
ruḥtu u-gētu, ya-Mḥammed;
welli ma ye'ūl ya-Mḥammed,
yiṣbaḥ ma'tūl, ya-Mḥammed,
fi dire-l-fūl, ya-Mḥammed,
hāwa we-ummo wimrāt ʿammo, ya-Mḥammed!

O Moḥammed,
By Allah, O Moḥammed,
Son of Rāma, O Moḥammed,
Who was shaded by the cloud, O Moḥammed!
Sing, sing: "O Moḥammed!"
In the desert! [— O Moḥammed].

[P.4 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

×539 And when ye sing: "O Moḥammed!",
●782 Go ye and come ye [— O Moḥammed].
But whoever fails to say: "O Moḥammed!",
Will lie, some morning, slain [— O Moḥammed],
In the bean-field, [— O Moḥammed],
He and his mother and the wife of his uncle!
[O Moḥammed].

1—4. Invocation of the Prophet Moḥammed.

2. "By Allah" is used to confirm the truth of what follows in the song.

[792] 3. Rāma is, according to Maḥmûd, a name of the mother of the Prophet.

5. Addressed to companions.

[192] [776] 8. "Go ye and come ye" is, of course, to be completed with: bis-salāme, "in safety". The road to the excavations is often long and the peasant-boy's imagination pictures ḥarāmiye (thieves) and 'afārit (evil spirits) lurking about everywhere. There is, in Cairo, a proverb, which runs: kullē ḫarâbe welina fiha 'afrit, "In every ruined house there lurks for us an evil spirit." In order to understand this proverb, it is necessary to remember, that in the native quarters of oriental cities, [362] [172] half or totally ruined houses are a much more frequent sight than with us. Moreover, Abu Gûrâb (the ruin of the sun-temple, see page II) before our excavations, was regarded as full of evil spirits.

[241] [262] 11. In the spring, wide stretches of land are covered with the tall fûl plant or hog's bean. In Egypt this bean is an important element in the nourishment of man and beast. Compare No. 14, l. 2.

12. He involves with him in his ruin, even his dearest relatives.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

5.

539x
782

Prayer to the Prophet.

Ya nabīne, ya sākin Ṭēbe,
u-ʿalēk, ya nabīne, u-ṣallēne.
Yōm el-ʾiyāme išfaʿ fīne,
wiššaffaʿ, ya rasūl Alla,
nuṣṣ el-layāli we-ḥakam Alla.

O our Prophet, who dwellest in Ṭēbe,
For thee, O our Prophet, we entreat Allah's blessing.
At the Day of Resurrection speak for us,
And mediate for us, thou messenger of Allah,
At midnight — but Allah's will be done.

1. Ṭēbe is another name for the city of Medīna, in which the Prophet Moḥammed lies buried.
2. That is: "we say: Allah bless Moḥammed and save him".

[778]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

6.

×539
782

Praise of the Prophet.

This song was a special favorite of our boys and was often sung:

"All nature, animate and inanimate, rendered its homage to the Prophet." Evidently Maḥmûd understood the song not solely as something that happened in time long past, when the Prophet still walked on earth. He wished the camel, mentioned in l. 5, to be understood as the one which carries the Maḥmal[1] each year from Cairo to Mecca and back. This interpretation certainly is false and artificial, but it indicates, that Maḥmûd thought not only of the distant past: each nod [824] of the wind-bowed palms and the opening of every rosebud is, even to this day, a greeting for the Prophet.

Ya ʿeni, weṣ-ṣala ʿan-nabi,
we-ṣalāt en-nabi maksabi.
Mitwaḥḥid rabbak, ya ṣabi.
Wen-naḫle sagadit lin-nabi,
wel-gamal ḥām lin-nabi,
wil-ḥagar lān lin-nabi,
wil-ward fattaḥ lin-nabi,
wel-ḥaṣa sabbaḥ le-rabbo:
kullo kerāme lin-nabi.

Thou, mine eye, Allah's blessing be upon the Prophet!
And the prayer of the Prophet shall be my gain.
Thy Lord is an only one — O boy.
The palm-tree bowed before the Prophet,
And the camel ran about searching for the Prophet,

[1]) Regarding Maḥmal see Lane II p. 182.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

And the stone was soft for the Prophet, 539
And the roses unfolded for the Prophet, 782
And the pebbles praised God, their Lord:
"All in honor of the Prophet"!

1. "Mine eye" = "My darling"; compare No. 2. Here it is resumed by "boy" in l. 2.

2. The Prophet is the intercessor of man before God, and as such rewards the pious who invoke God's blessing upon him. Compare the same line of thought in No. 8. [776]

3. "The Lord thy God is one God."

4. The pebbles which cover the surface of the desert say: subḥān Allāh, "(I praise) the perfection of God."

7.

The Prophet in the Rose-Garden.

Moḥammed daḫil eg-genēne
wel-wardē ḍallil ʿalē.
Be-ṭarfē šālo el-ʾaṣab,
farado we-ṣalla ʿalē.

Moḥammed entered the garden,
And the roses shaded him.
The edge of his shawl was embroidered in gold.
He spread it and prayed upon it.

2. A love-song of Upper Egypt (Qene?), of which Klunzinger (p. 110) gives a translation, begins thus: "I entered the garden and the roses shaded me".

3. The shawl, which is worn wound about the head, as a turban, often serves as a prayer-rug. No Moslem at prayer would touch the bare earth. He prays upon a little rug, designed for the purpose; upon his cloak, or, as in this case, upon the shawl of his turban. [298]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Sick with Longing.

90.

539×
832

Ya ma inte waḥišni,
ya gamīl, we-rāḥi fīk!
Ya me'anis 'albi, le-mīn aškīk?
aškīk lilli 'adir, 'adir yihdīk
we-yballir eṣ-ṣabir amalo.
Ana ḥali le-bu'dak lam yirḍīk.

Oh, how lonely thou makest me,
Lovely one, while my spirit is with thee!
O companion of my heart, to whom shall I complain of thee?
I will complain of thee to the Mighty One, — [782] ●
mighty to guide thee
And make the patient one attain (the goal of) his hope.
It will not please thee (when thou seest) what is my state because of thine absence.

4. Of course God; compare No. 87, l. 2. He, alone, has power, so to guide the girl, that she may finally listen to her lover. [776]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

122.

Capricious Love.

539x
932

Yabiaḍ, ya ḥilu-l-'awām,
yalli 'ala ṣudrak rummān,
kam aṣlaḥak winte ṛaḍbān!
Ṭalet 'alēna-l-layāli!

Thou white one with the sweet form,
Thou, on whose breast pomegranates lie,
How many, "Allah restore thee", it costs me when thou art angry!
The nights have been too long for us!

3. Aṣlaḥak Allâ (May Allah restore thee) is a much used, [782] ejaculatory prayer.
4. During which we have been far from each other.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

126.

Recognized.

x 539 832 A girl wishes to ingratiate herself with a certain well-to-do young man (ll. 1—2). He repels her, saying that she bears the name of her other lover plainly upon her lips.

Massik bil-ḫēr, ya-Mḥammed melā'ini,
rākib kuḥēle u-rāḥ el-kummē sittīnī.
Dā'i'a 'ala šiffetak ḥandar
u-'Osmān Bē! 'Iš' el-banāt ṣandara!
Ya rabb, neggīni.

"Good evening, Moḥammed, who meetest me
Riding a noble mare, and trailing the sleeve yards [292]
long."
"[O be gone!] Tatooed in green on thy lips is
The name Osman Bê! — — How fickle are girls
when in love!
O Lord, save me [from all danger]!"

2. The last words mean literally: trailing the sleeve sixty (yards) long, a great exaggeration.

3. Literally: "Thou hast green color tatooed and the [304] name etc." Regarding tatooing see No. 64. Girls often have the name of a lover tatooed upon themselves. Compare a song from Endor in Galilee, in Dalman's collection, p. 112. "... the hands a work of the Creator and the blue tatooing over them strewn. On her breast she writes Ḥ and M and D." (These letters stand for Ḥ(a)m(a)d, the name of the lover.)

5. This exclamation has no connection with what precedes, [782] as it would seem from the English. It is one of the innumerable, ejaculatory prayers, which Moslems enjoy repeating.

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CHAPTER III.

WORKING DAYS AND HOLIDAYS, DAYS OF JUBILEE AND DAYS OF MOURNING.

WORKING-DAY LIFE OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

In Upper Egypt the life of the ordinary inhabitant of the towns is passed in a simple and uniform manner. Before sunrise he leaves his couch, performs the morning ablutions enjoined by his religion, and repeats his early prayer. To say his morning prayer after sunrise is forbidden by the ordinances of his religion, and to allow the sun to rise above one's slumbering head is universally regarded as prejudicial to health. He then drinks his cup of coffee and smokes his pipe, either at home or in the public coffee-house. His breakfast, which he takes after his coffee (though sometimes before it), consists of the remains of his meal of the previous evening, or of cakes and milk, or for a trifle he procures from the market the ever ready national dish of *ful*, that is, stewed beans. He then engages in his vocations, buys, sells, writes, works, or moves about, all in the most comfortable, quiet, and deliberate manner. "What is not done to-day may be to-morrow"—in good Arabic, *bokra in shah Allah* (to-morrow if God please)—stands written on his forehead in large letters. The most urgent affairs leave always a quarter of an hour free in which to gossip with acquaintances over coffee and a pipe, be it in retail-shop, workshop, or office. And if many acquaintances turn up the more numerous grow these quarters-of-an-hour. Now and again he has no work, or no desire to do it, and then he drags himself from one friend to the other. Bread for himself and his family will no doubt turn up; *robinna kerim*—"the Lord is gracious (or liberal);" it is but little he requires, and in case of necessity his soft-hearted neighbour will not allow him to go supperless to bed. Even before the mid-day call of the muezzin from the minaret, he

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[pp. 1-157 not processed]

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has made his preparations for the hour of prayer, and after the performance of his devotions he returns home and enjoys his simple dinner. This consists for the most part only of bread with fruits or with white country cheese, milk, salt fish, or molasses (the so-called black honey).

He takes care not to make his mid-day sleep too short, especially in the long warm days of summer, and he lies down in his house or in his shop, in the café, or in any shady spot in the open air; at this time the streets and markets become deserted. Not till well through the afternoon does he again move, when he begins the second portion of the day as he did the first, with ablutions, prayers, and coffee, afterwards bestirring himself with some energy to make up during the remainder of the day for the time he has dreamed and trifled away. For this remainder is but short, and with the last rays of the setting sun the call from the minaret is again heard, the trader shuts his shop, the workman flings by his tool, the scholar, the writer, and the man of learning shut their books. This dawdling habit, which, in the province, at least, is the rule, is not, however, solely the result of indolence, but arises more from the fact that little trade or industry exists, and the want of a regular weekly day of rest is also not without blame. The natives when necessary often display the greatest ardour and even steady perseverance.

The cultivation of the fields allows the countryman less leisure for the *dolce far niente*, but even he does not overwork himself. From the mellowness and fertility of the soil his labour is light enough when compared with that of a northern peasant, and chiefly consists in the artificial watering of the land, effected mostly by the labour of young people or of cattle. When he can the countryman also takes his hours of idleness, and sleeps, and gossips, and sings. He too is never in a hurry. This slowness of action, intimately connected as it is with fatalism, is as intolerable to a European who is in haste, as it is beneficial to one who wishes to rest a little from the hurry and scurry of the West.

After his evening devotions the dweller in the town moves

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a shallow tub, and by pouring warm water over the body and scrubbing it with soap and date bast. In the public baths certain hours or days are set apart for the fair sex, and here many women spend half days bathing, adorning themselves, smoking, and gossiping. At these times no male, not even a eunuch would dare to set foot in the apartments.

In other respects also the women are by no means robbed of social pleasures. They visit each other often enough, if possible early in the morning, and are wont to remain half a day, a whole day, or even several days, though both parties may be in the same town. They smoke, drink coffee (the latter being less in use among the women than among the men—the opposite to what holds good among the Franks), gossip, show their ornaments and finery, tell stories and wonderful tales, sew, embroider (but do not knit), sing and dance, or better, make some one sing and dance before them (since a well-conducted lady ought neither to be seen nor heard, and therefore should not sing), laugh and make merry—in short the harem so greatly pitied elsewhere enjoy life, but on the sole condition, that no man be present! They are less often allowed to take a walk in the open air; some—and this is considered a great virtue—never leave the house after their marriage. Their lady friends come to visit them instead, and as almost every house in these regions has its court-yard or a terrace, women are by no means kept out of the open air. Moslim women are generally excused from the burdensome prayers of the men, and pious or even hypocritical women are in the Moslim female world a great rarity; indeed they scarcely know the most important doctrines of their religion. Piety in them is even looked upon with dislike.

At mid-day the husband always eats alone, or with his boys or guests. Immediately afterwards, however, the wife again comes into honour since her lord likes to enjoy his siesta in the chambers of the harem. After sunset no respectable woman must show herself outside the house, even though veiled and attended, and now, or some hours later, the husband

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796 [169] while those who have lost some one dear to them recall him or her to their thoughts, proceed to the cemetery (especially the women), stick a palm branch into the grave mound, distribute pastry and alms, and even pass the night there with their family.

The other feast follows three months after. It is called the Great Feast or Feast of Offering, and lasts for four days, but is really the smaller feast. The baking, cannon-firing, receiving of visitors, embracing, congratulating, and dressing go on as at the little feast; the festive gaiety is, however, dulled, and is not so universal as after the Ramadan. The chief ceremony [782] on this occasion is the eating of "offering flesh" in memory of the offering of Abraham. Every believer *must* have his [262] piece of meat on this day, and anyone who cannot procure it for himself receives it from his richer neighbours, each of whom offers a sheep for every member of his family. The native Christians abstain from flesh on this day out of [088] opposition. This is the most brilliant period of the pilgrimage in Mecca.

FEAST OF THE SAINTS.

796 776 In the middle of the month Shaaban, which precedes Ramadan, is celebrated the great annual jubilee (a kind of wakes), when every town that can claim to have had a saint of any note, having chosen him as its patron, honours his memory by some kind of festive demonstration—the saint having been a man gifted by God with miraculous power, not necessarily on account of great piety, but oftener as a compensation for harmless and innocent imbecility. The [174] ancient Egyptians also had their patrons and protectors, namely, special divinities or forms and varieties of such for 796 particular cities. In Upper Egypt the chief festival is that [184] of the Sheikh Abder-Rahim at Keneh; it is for Upper Egypt what the celebrated fair at Tantah is for Lower Egypt. The latter is evidently a continuation of the ancient Egyptian feast [078] of Diana at Bubastis, or is analogous to it. From the beginning of the month onwards some bustle prevails round the temple

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or mausoleum of the sheikh, as the saint is called, booths and tents are erected, and the spot where he is buried is crowded with devout visitors. At night the halls of the mausoleum are lighted up, all the lamps above the tomb being lighted; the citizens crowd to the spot, listen to the reading of the Koran, and give themselves up to the intoxication of the *zikr*, a kind of religious dance which will be described afterwards. Coffee and sherbet are served out in the booths, and dancing-girls, singers, and instrumental performers attract the people, the stalls of the dealers in fruits and confectionery extend far into the city; all the shopkeepers have provided large supplies of goods; foreign traders expose their commodities; the festival assumes the appearance of a fair. The nearer the feast the greater the throng of people that assembles from far and near. Every hour brings more new-comers, many of whom advance in solemn procession, horsemen and flags in front, with drums, musical instruments, and women behind, who express in a melancholy chant their longing regards towards the sainted sheikh, or utter quavers of joy. The flags and the sheep that are dragged along in the procession are intended as offerings for the saint, in fulfilment of a vow made for a prayer granted in the course of the year. When the attendants of the sheikh, as sacrificial priests, have taken as much as they want, the remainder is divided among the struggling people.

At the place where the festival is held boys and youths amuse themselves on a large swing, the smaller and the girls enjoy a kind of see-saw; on the level unused area of the graveyard the equestrian performers go through their manœuvres. Clad in a wide flowing blouse, with the sleeves thrown far back, their feet planted on the broad flat stirrups, as they sit in their saddles that rise into a high pommel before and behind, holding upright in their hands a long pole, these performers ride at full speed, one after the other, from one row of people to the opposite. They display their dexterity by suddenly stopping their flying horses when close beside the frightened crowd, in accomplishing which their pole serves as a support, and by raising the dust in clouds causes their darting to be visible to a distance.

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844 ments the poor child of humanity till it sickens and falls
[776] into convulsions, which are therefore also called karina (see
[753] chap. vii.). Immediately after the birth the mother receives
[262] melted butter with honey and fenugreek, and instead of fasting she must daily eat at least a fowl or a good piece of meat, which her female friends and neighbours give her. On
846 the sixth day the mother in her turn sends these a plate of *kishk* (decoction of wheat and sour milk) as a sign that they are invited for the following day. Above the head of the sleeping child is placed on this night a pitcher, hung with
[789] gold coins and lighted with tapers, the pitcher being long-necked (*dorâk*) in the case of boys, short-necked (*kulleh*) in that of girls.

846 On the morning of the seventh day (*yum es-subâ'a*) the
852 house is filled with female visitors. The child is placed upon a sieve, tapers are fixed upon metal plates and on the point of a sword, and the child is carried in procession through the whole house, while the midwife scatters *bisle*, that is, wheat,
[782] barley, pease, and salt as provender for the wicked spirits.
[776] The child is shaken in the sieve, being thereby believed to lose fear for the rest of its life, and its eyes are held up to the sun to sharpen them. The cymbals and small drums, the singing and trilling of the women, make the outer world acquainted with the joy within the house. The guests present
[431] the mother and midwife with money and gold, for which
[262] they distribute parched chick-peas, St. John's bread, and walnuts.

But the father must also keep the seventh day as a festival, especially if the child is a boy, though in many cases he does not dare up till this time to look upon his own child, since he might possibly, and quite against his will, do some harm to his tender offspring by a glance of his eye. He invites his friends to a feast, and entertains them with Koran reading, zikrs, and similar pious amusements, or sends for instrumental players, singers, and dancing-girls. The son is brought in a
[431] sieve and shown to the guests, who rejoice with the father,
[553] and perhaps also leave some gifts. A plate of candy-sugar is now sent to the kadi or some other theologian; he sucks